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Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Russia: S. Filatov Criticizes Korzhakov Election Cancellation Remarks

*MM0605152696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
7 May 96 p 2*

["Lightning Analysis" by Stepan Kiselev: "Warning Shot to the Head"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Evidently using his professional flair to sniff out the danger threatening Boris Yeltsin in the election scheduled for 16 June, Aleksandr Korzhakov, chief of the president's Security Service, has proposed eliminating it by canceling this very election. The logic is understandable: The election means a problem; no election, no problem.

In an interview with Britain's THE OBSERVER the general cites the opinion of "a lot of influential people in Russia," among whom Korzhakov counts himself, "who are in favor of postponing the election." Thus, Korzhakov willy-nilly confirms the information which has recently filtered out from behind the Kremlin wall that an anticonstitutional action plan is ripening in the president's most immediate entourage, whose essence boils down to this slogan: "Either Yeltsin will be president or no one will."

The most paradoxical thing in this affair is that the general made his "defeatist" statement against a background of highly optimistic front-line reports from the election campaign: The president's rating is growing, and popular support is widening. Although it is a bad general who believes his own propaganda, rather than operational data. Korzhakov, incidentally, makes it clear that the conclusion on a deferment is based, in addition to everything else, "on precise data." What data can he mean?

In the middle of April the Institute of the Development of Parliamentarianism, headed by the well-known sociologist Nugzar Betaneli, published data from its studies of public opinion, which differ very substantially from those relayed by the mass media. In terms of the state of society at that time the institute forecast a convincing and undoubted win for Zyuganov in the presidential election. It would have been possible to brush that study aside, but for one circumstance: It was Betaneli's institute in the past that predicted the State Duma elections with the utmost accuracy in both 1993 and 1995.

Sergey Filatov, leader of the All-Russia Public Committee in Support of Boris Yeltsin, gave his assessment of Korzhakov's statement at a meeting with regional press journalists.

As ITAR-TASS observer Tamara Zamyatina reported specially for IZVESTIYA, the statement by Aleksandr Korzhakov, chief of the president's Security Service, on the expediency of postponing the election "could lead not to the stabilization of society and the country's security but serve as a spur to disturbances and a coup d'etat."

In S. Filatov's opinion, if today "someone wants to place himself above the law and the constitution, tomorrow politicians might try to do this, and the day after tomorrow — the military. We have already seen what can come of this."

Sergey Filatov voiced regret in connection with the fact that just over one month before the election, when Boris Yeltsin is stepping up his election campaign and his rating is growing, people are making such "inappropriate and harmful statements, from which nothing good can be expected." Moreover, the leader of the All-Russia Public Committee remarked, "there is no juridical mechanism for postponing elections, apart from a nationwide referendum."

Filatov said that in a personal conversation with him Boris Yeltsin had reacted in a sharply negative way to a similar proposal by a group of Federation Council members, toughly declaring: "There can be no question of postponing the election."

"The most correct path to a Yeltsin win is the path of observing legality and the constitution. We must roll up our sleeves and work, not harboring the illusion that people up above might think up some alternative solution for preserving power," the former leader of the Presidential Staff emphasized.

As for the president himself, when answering an INTERFAX correspondent's question about the possibility of postponing the election, Boris Yeltsin emphasized: "Korzhakov is not alone in thinking that a win for Zyuganov would mark the start of a civil war.... And yet I believe in the wisdom of Russian voters, and so the election will take place at the constitutional time."

Boris Yeltsin went on to report that he had "told Korzhakov not to get involved in politics and not to make any more such statements."

Russia: Duma Deputies Oppose Postponement of Presidential Elections

*LD0605172396 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1247 GMT 6 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 6 (Interfax) — A group of State Duma deputies are drafting a resolution opposing the postponement of presidential elections in Russia.

The State Duma is likely to approve the document on May 15 during the first plenary session after a break, Chairman of the Duma Security Committee Viktor Ilyukhin (the Communist Party faction) told Interfax Monday.

The decision to draft such a resolution was taken in response to the statement by chief of the presidential security service Aleksandr Korzhakov on the expediency of putting off presidential elections for the sake of stability.

Ilyukhin said that the resolution is being drafted by deputies representing different factions and deputies' groups. The Communist Party, he said, is deeply concerned about Korzhakov's words. It is well aware, however, that a statement made exclusively by the Communist Party will be viewed by all as a move in the interests of the election campaign, he added. He announced that this opinion is shared by other deputies, so the document is being drafted on behalf of the entire State Duma.

Russia: Judge, Lebed Oppose Postponement of Presidential Elections

LD0605204396 Moscow NTV in Russian 1535 GMT 6 May 96

[Studio interview with Russian Constitutional Court Judge Boris Ebzeyev by Pavel Lobkov on 6 May — live or recorded; from the "Hero of the Day" program]

[FBIS Summary] In a 24-minute interview, Russian Constitutional Court Judge Boris Ebzeyev comments on presidential bodyguard Aleksandr Korzhakov's support for the postponement of the upcoming presidential elections. He says that any postponement would be illegal.

Ebzeyev says: "I managed to see some of the television reports on the president's comment that the head of the personal guard of the president of the Russian Federation [Korzhakov] — and I use the president's term — should keep out of politics. I again and again cannot contain my joy at the position taken by the head of state, because that position alone — I mean the position that the election of the president of the Russian Federation should take place within the deadline set by the Constitution of the Russian Federation — is the only position that accords with the basic law of our state."

Lobkov points out that Ebzeyev is the only member of the Constitutional Court to agree to comment publicly on Korzhakov's statement in London's THE OBSERVER on 5 May. Ebzeyev replies: "I think the absolute majority of my colleagues took the view that the hero of the day [the subject of today's program] is neither the Constitutional Court as a whole nor the judges on the Constitutional Court, but the author of this statement — I mean the head of the security service of the president of the Russian Federation. I have come into the studio of NTV to give my thoughts and try to give a certain juridicial commentary on the statement or, rather, proposal made by Aleksandr Vasiliyevich Korzhakov."

Lobkov then says that the only voice being heard speaking in favor of Korzhakov's proposal is that of Sergey Shakhray, former legal adviser to President Yeltsin, who has suggested that the Federation Council could make a new ruling on the date of the election. Ebzeyev replies that he was astonished, especially since Shakhray had helped draft the Russian Constitution.

Asked how the Constitutional Court would react if through "chicanery, behind-the-scenes negotiations, or a Duma resolution," the situation was altered to make a postponement possible, Ebzeyev answers: "If attempts were met with success, I would describe them as an usurpation of power. I see absolutely no legal bases or chicanery, as you put it, that could be employed here. However, if they do exist, then they are of an extremely and absolutely unconstitutional nature." He adds that under the Constitution, the Federation Council is responsible for setting the date of the election, and if it fails to keep to that date, responsibility for the election passes to the Central Electoral Commission.

Asked if the Constitutional Court plans to take any action with regard to Korzhakov's comments, Ebzeyev concludes: "Statements by the head of the president's security service or any other official are not in themselves bases for activating the mechanism of a judicial constitutional investigation. Even if such issues were raised in the Constitutional Court, I personally would object to such proposals. This is just one of many statements."

The program also includes a brief recording of presidential candidate General Aleksandr Lebed commenting on the possibility of postponing the election: "If the election proceeds on time, if the election is not accompanied by bullets and tank shells, then the political situation in the country can be described as slightly heightened disorder. If the election is called off or postponed then the situation will no longer be political, but military-criminal."

Russia: Reasons for Korzhakov's Election Delay Call Viewed

MM0705091796 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 7 May 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Aleksandr Gamov under the headline "Why Has Korzhakov Emerged From Presidential Shadows?"

and the English headline "Yeltsin in Crisis as Aide Calls For Poll Delay"]

[FBIS Translated Text] By putting forward the idea of postponing the elections, Korzhakov has thrown down a challenge to Yeltsin — that was how certain observers have been describing the recent statement by the No. 1 bodyguard. It sounds mysterious.

There was a time when the head of the Russian Presidential Security Service [SBP] would stay literally hard on the heels of his boss — not only would he be first out of the car and hold the door open for Boris Nikolayevich, but he would sometimes take his arm and, if necessary, hold an umbrella over him.

But now, emerging from the president's shadow and having become an independent political figure "under Yeltsin," he has seen a great deal [mnogoye uvidel].

We observed Korzhakov's first experience on Russian Public Television 14 December last year, on the eve of the parliamentary elections. Back then he easily but seriously wounded Kobzon and Grachev, while playing up to Chernomyrdin and Rybkin. And he said the following about Yeltsin — if Boris Nikolayevich refuses to run for president "something bad will happen."

"A lot of influential people in Russia are in favor of postponing the elections, and I am too," Korzhakov stated in an interview with Britain's THE OBSERVER. "If we have the elections there is no way of avoiding a fight. If Yeltsin wins, the radical opposition will claim the results were falsified and there will be unrest. If Zyuganov wins, even if he takes a centrist line, the same people won't leave him in peace and they'll scream."

In terms of the big picture, there is nothing sensational about Korzhakov's revelations — many people in Boris Yeltsin's entourage (and not only there) have been considering postponing the elections from time to time. It is also known that in the past year several attempts were made to persuade the president to take this step, but he did not want to hear about it. What is far more interesting is something else — Korzhakov is the only one of the president's closest comrades-in-arms to have publicly stated that Yeltsin could lose and Zyuganov could win. Why and to what end is he making his thoughts known at precisely this juncture?

There are several different theories about this. One of the likeliest is that on his travels with Boris Nikolayevich through preelection Russia, Korzhakov has concluded that the Kremlin analysts' incantation that "Only Yeltsin Will Win!" — like, incidentally, the numerous polls in favor of the president — cannot be taken at face value; the situation in the country is too varied. The SBP chief, unlike many in Yeltsin's entourage, is a realist. Moreover he probably knows a lot of things that you and I — and maybe even the president himself — do not.

It cannot be ruled out that Aleksandr Vasilyevich has decided to act independently in the role of a "crafty Shumeyko," launching a trial balloon into the political game in order to train the gunfire of criticism on himself, along with approving reactions. Having thereby tested public opinion and won the support (if such exists, naturally) of those of like mind, perhaps he is planning to pressure the president?

Or maybe everything is much more simple? Aleksandr Vasilyevich was in a good mood, he was relaxing, and...he let the cat out of the bag. Without thinking of the consequences.

Russia: Korzhakov's Remarks Seen Increasing Pressure on Yeltsin

MK0705084996 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 7 May 96 p 1

[Report by the Political Department: "Korzhakov. THE OBSERVER. Election. Here Comes a 'Third Force'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It has already become a tradition that on the eve of particularly important political events Lieutenant General Korzhakov, chief of the presidential protective service, briefs the public on his, albeit pointedly personal, view of the goings-on.

This fact holds interest, first, because the general is one of the most influential persons in the presidential entourage and wields considerable executive clout and, second, because the general's view differs considerably from that of the president.

With a week to go before the Duma elections, the general, despite the president's explicit support for the Chernomyrdin party, made a point of giving his backing to the campaign's outsider: the Rybkin bloc.

At the beginning of this week, Korzhakov made public his stance on the question of the presidential election in two interviews: one for THE OBSERVER and the other for the INTERFAX news agency.

In short, the general suggested that the election should be postponed indefinitely to prevent instability in society. According to the general's sinister forecasts, any result of the election can push society toward bloodshed.

MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS has repeatedly written (last time in the issue of the day before yesterday) that there are two groups in the presidential staff and entourage. The first group stands for the election to be contested and won. This tactic has been more than once announced by the Duma faction of Russia Is Our Home and many others; the other group, meanwhile, urges the election to be put off under the pretext of retaining political stability in society.

We have also written that Korzhakov is a representative of this group.

Now there is no doubt left any more, and one can state that a genuine "third force" has entered the electoral scene, a force that does not wish the election to take place and that has publicly announced that — a force everyone, including President Yeltsin, will have to reckon with.

The second point that should be made is that the standoff between the two groups in the presidential entourage appears to have reached such an intensity that it could not but spill over from the Kremlin corridors onto the pages of the print media. Undoubtedly, this subject will now become a matter of public debate, which is bound to heighten tensions between the groups even further.

Like any other well-planned action, Korzhakov's statement pursues a number of objectives. One of them is clear: to step up pressure on the president. Possibly, this is the general's last chance to persuade the president to accept his stance. In this case the general went for broke.

He could also have had a different motive: the publication of the presidential protective service chief can lower Yeltsin's fast-growing rating, and then the president will have no other choice but to cancel the election or dismiss the general.

There is also a different theory, under which both scenarios — the election and its cancellation — are to be played in parallel, and the scenario of cancellation should hang as the Damoclean sword over society and drop should the president think it necessary. This has little credibility, though.

A third option is also possible: The general is a master of intimidation, and there can be no better way of scaring the wits out of the other candidates than by threatening them with an election delay.

One way or another, with the vote just a month away, the party of the "election delay" has joined in the electoral fray, and in the very near future we are bound to see its other active leaders; to all appearances, these will be General Barsukov and some other chiefs of the power agencies.

Not only they, however; the statements by 13 businessmen, who propose a compromise with Zyuganov instead of the vote, and some other public figures paradoxically echo this stance.

In fact, the idea of delaying the election brings together all the forces for whom Yeltsin's defeat means the loss of everything they have and who will go to any lengths to preserve the status quo.

Naturally, it is all passed off to society as concern about preserving stability, but the general and his allies have no serious arguments in support of this stance. While paying lip service to stability, they are planting a time bomb under it. The reason is that, according to the latest polls, 86 percent of the voters are planning to turn out for the June election, and a cancellation of the vote can actually set off an explosion. Furthermore, a cancellation or a postponement of the election would call into question the cornerstone of a still fragile Russian democracy, weaken confidence in Russia on the part of international institutions, and so forth.

From a human point of view, failure to hold the election would be seen as a manifestation of a quality unflattering for both generals and presidents, namely cowardice, something the people are unlikely to embrace.

Finally, one cannot but state that regardless of all the theories, General Korzhakov, having essentially left behind his past as an eminence grise, has entered the realm of public politics. Meanwhile, the increasing role of generals in politics should always be a warning to a civil society.

Russia: Zyuganov Stresses Holding Elections According to Law

*LD0605173796 Moscow NTV in Russian
1500 GMT 6 May 96*

[Video report from Bonn, Germany, by correspondent Yevgeniy Kondratyev, including recording of interview with Russian Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov — from the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kondratyev, over video of streetscapes] Presenting Gennadiy Zyuganov's arrival in Bonn is no easy matter. His address to the German Society for Foreign Policy — it was this society that invited the Russian communist leader to Germany — was held behind closed doors, without any television cameras. This was not because Zyuganov himself had anything against it; simply, some of those prominent public and political personalities and government officials who had been invited are as yet wary of appearing on the television screen alongside Zyuganov — though a very great deal of interest is being shown in him.

Zyuganov himself is showing no sign of being at all offended by this attitude. He is still under the impression of his first visit to the western part of Germany. He once served in the group of Soviet troops in the former GDR.

He has received a large number of invitations from foreign countries of late, and four from the United States alone. But Zyuganov decided to visit only Germany in the run-up to the presidential elections, granting due import to Germany's political weight, its interest in Russian affairs, and the traditional partnership ties between the two countries.

Zyuganov's main speech in Bonn is scheduled for this evening — in the same hall, incidentally, where Sergey Kovalev spoke after the start of the Chechen war. A meeting was held in the same hall in the Bundestag with the heads of factions of all the political parties represented in parliament. But even social democrat Rudolf Scharping dodged the press presence, and only the Party of Democratic Socialism, the successor of Erich Honecker's Socialist Unity Party, displayed genuine hospitality.

Zyuganov — who, incidentally, has drawn the final election campaign slot on Russian television — complained in Bonn about discrimination in the electronic mass media, where every day there is only one man on show, the Russian president, who, Zyuganov says, has no need of advertising time.

Zyuganov had a few harsh words to say about NTV Television, too, but gave an interview without any problems.

[Interviewing Zyuganov in corridor] Gennadiy Andreyevich, there are rumors around that some sort of compromise could be reached. That is, that the presidential command is going to make some sort of concessions, and you agree to postponing the elections. What can you say on this, is such a compromise possible, in principle?

[Zyuganov] A compromise is possible only on the basis of the law, the strict observance of the law by all citizens in the country, including the president. If citizens are deprived of their last right to voice their opinion at the elections, nobody will be able to cope with the country then. We propose holding the elections, but all presidential candidates should sit down at the same table and sign an agreement which would guarantee stability, security, and steadiness and the absence of political and ideological persecution, whichever of the candidates may win. For that we are indeed ready.

[Kondratyev] But the elections should take place whatever happens?

[Zyuganov] They should take place according to the law.

[Kondratyev] And if the Duma passes a law modifying the system of elections?

[Zyuganov] The Duma has already passed a law on electing the president, and in accordance with that law the elections are now in full swing.

[Kondratyev] So there should be no new law?

[Zyuganov] Well, you know yourself: You start a football match, and if you propose rewriting the rules after the first half, then the result will be annulled, no matter what.

[Kondratyev] Are you at all afraid about the warning by Russian bankers that they have levers which they could later use to exert influence on you?

[Zyuganov] What I want to say is that they themselves have an interest in stability, and that can be attained only on the basis of precise and consistent observance of the law and the election rules.

Russia: Yeltsin Talks With Rivals; Rumors of Postponement Linger

MK0605141896 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 May 96 p 1

[Report by Marina Shakina: "Yeltsin Continues To Meet With His Rivals. There Is Growing Talk About the Need To Move the Election Date"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A new stage has begun in the election race, that of active consultations. Shortly before the May Day festivities the president had a meeting with Aleksandr Lebed and yesterday he met with Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy.

At present, according to some reports, three consultation processes are occurring simultaneously as follows: the "oldest" and most well-known negotiations by the "Third Force" (Yavlinskiy, Lebed, and Svyatoslav Fedorov about fielding a single candidate); the talk about the need for negotiations — rather than actual negotiations per se — among the main aspirants to the post of head of state [Zyuganov and Yeltsin], that was initiated recently by a group of leading entrepreneurs; and now the presidential series. And, in an additional touch, talk is livening about the need to move elections to a later date.

After a meeting between Communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov and the businessmen who signed an appeal to the presidential candidates, entrepreneur Boris Berezovskiy slightly lifted the veil over the content of the confidential conversation. The entrepreneurs proposed to Zyuganov three options for a compromise between him and Yeltsin. One of them was the legitimate postponement of the presidential elections.

Yesterday a report came in from London. In an interview with THE OBSERVER Aleksandr Korzhakov suggested that presidential elections should be postponed in the interests of stability. He clearly indicated that this opinion is shared by "many influential people," especially considering that if Yeltsin wins, the opposition will claim that the elections were rigged anyway.

Against this backdrop some observers attach a special significance to the fact that President Yeltsin's first meeting was with, of all people, Lebed. If this is seen as the president's attention toward the "Third Force" — public opinion, after all, regards Grigoriy Yavlinskiy as its informal leader. Why then Lebed?

The president and the general, as follows from the scanty comments by Yeltsin's press secretary and by Lebed himself, were mainly assuring each other that elections cannot be postponed and that nobody should call their results into question.

The natural speculation in the press about Yeltsin's purported propositions to Lebed in exchange for the latter's dropping out of the race — deputy premiership or the post of defense minister — was denied by the negotiators. Even so, some analysts are increasingly suggesting that the main aim of the consultations on Yeltsin's part was to "test" the general's mood in case of force majeur political circumstances, when much will depend on the army. Then Lebed could play a substantial role.

What is noteworthy is not only the problem of the preference that Yeltsin has given to Lebed as opposed to Yavlinskiy. The positions of President Yeltsin and of the retired general on Chechnya are much closer than are those of Lebed and Yavlinskiy as "Third Force" partners.

Reports of yesterday's meeting between Yeltsin and Yavlinskiy were even more meager. According to the presidential press service the subject of the discussion was the sociopolitical situation, the activity by the Yabloko Duma faction, and prospects of the election campaign. Rumors about a presidential initiative, flattering to Yavlinskiy, were, to all appearances, not confirmed.

After Yeltsin's meeting with Yavlinskiy, no progress over the unification of the democratic movement has been observed since yesterday. Yabloko's sharply critical line toward the government has never been revised within the Yavlinskiy party.

On the whole, in the past few days the political atmosphere around one raw nerve of the election process — the shifting of election date — has been palpably heating up. This is evident, among other things, in how frequently and persistently the politicians try to convince society and each other that the elections must be held not later than 16 June of this year and that a delay is inadmissible. The following psychological paradox has long been known: The more that a person is being assured of something, the more suspicious he becomes....

Russia: Yeltsin Having 'Hard Time' on Yaroslavl-Type Trips

MM0605101496 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 6 May 96 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Semenov: "Gambling on Direct Work With Voters. Boris Yeltsin Continues Tour of Russian Regions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yaroslavl — On 3 May Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin visited Yaroslavl. The visit itinerary was so full of meetings with ordinary Yaroslavl people that Boris Nikolayevich can be said to have basically spent all day outdoors. His meetings with voters were energetic, frank, and confident. Given the president's character, it is clear that Boris Nikolayevich has decided to keep faith with himself at this difficult time for him and for the country.

All the more so as, unlike his main rival Zyuganov — who is relying on active regional party branches — Yeltsin is having to do the lion's share of campaigning himself. Local branches of movements in support of democracy and reform have not yet gone into action and are working poorly. This can also be judged from Yaroslavl Oblast, although the first attempts at unification were made right here. Following the congress of Yeltsin supporters, Sergey Filatov, chairman of the movement, traveled first to Yaroslavl. His meetings with the leaders of the local branch resulted in a boost to its work. But, unfortunately, the movement seems to have gone underground.

Consequently, on trips such as the trip to Yaroslavl, Yeltsin is having a hard time. Everyone is trying to exploit the electoral situation to ask for as much as possible from the head of state. Thus, at the Higher Military Finance College, Boris Nikolayevich promised to allocate 10 billion rubles to build a new wing. The former Afghan veterans will have to pay 50 percent of the cost of building the new residential block. An edict will be issued in May on the phased indexation of payments to war and labor veterans.

At a meeting with oblast leaders Yeltsin briefly summed up the results of the reforms, noting that the process of transformation has already yielded some tangible positive results. The market has been saturated with goods and services, and political freedoms and glasnost have become part and parcel of our lives.

But even at this meeting the president had to make some pretty difficult financial decisions. Although the draft edict on the granting of a loan to Yaroslavl Oblast to develop individual housing under the "Feniks" program is to be further finalized in Moscow, the president's decision on the 30-percent set-aside procedure for enterprises to pay their wages was a hard one. Finance Minister Panskov quite reasonably stated that this measure of support for commodity producers had already been tried and had done tangible damage to the budget. But the position of enterprise directors was adamant, and supported by the oblast governor, and Yeltsin decided in favor of the setting aside of funds.

In general, if the president is met on each of his trips by people with outstretched hands, it will be hard for him to carry out all the decisions he is making on the hoof. But Yeltsin is not a man who is afraid of taking responsibility. And that policy has always brought him victory.

Russia: Yeltsin's Adviser Satarov Discusses Presidential Elections

BR0705120596 Paris LE FIGARO in French 7 May 96 p 5

[Interview with Georgiy Satarov, adviser to Russian President Yeltsin by Irina de Chikoff in Moscow; date not given: "The Final Battle Against Totalitarianism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [De Chikoff] The election strategy adopted by Boris Yeltsin seems to be: either me or chaos. This is a formula which, in his time, did not help General de Gaulle. Do you think it will work better for the president?

[Satarov] Chaos does not mean the same thing in Europe as it does in Russia. In Russia, we have not yet reached a mature system of alternating parties. You are observing our elections as a democratic test. We are living through them as the final battle against the totalitarianism that is seeking to take back the reins of power, as happened in August 1991 and October 1993 — but this time legally. The chaos strategy is the result of an observation. On the one hand, Russian voters harbor resentments against Boris Yeltsin. On the other hand, our studies have shown that they have formed an ideal image of the future president.

[De Chikoff] Are the Russian people still waiting for the "good czar" to show up?

[Satarov] No. But they do want a man that brings them hope. They would like a leader who will give them faith in their own future.

[De Chikoff] After four years in power can Boris Yeltsin incarnate this prototype?

[Satarov] In the entire wave of disaffection for the president, there is something that resembles a squabble between husband and wife. The disappointed supporters of Boris Yeltsin blame the head of state — just like a fight between husband and wife — but deep down, while bickering, they are still expecting reconciliation. And indeed we hope for it. For these reasons, the first phase of the election campaign is perhaps based on a more emotional — rather than rational — footing. There will be time later to go over the president's achievements, which are not insignificant.

[De Chikoff] Is Boris Yeltsin pleased with the turn taken by his campaign?

[Satarov] He is not pleased with how his trips to the regions are organized. He finds them too official, too stiff. They do not leave enough room for improvisation. All those bouquets of flowers and committees — it is a bit neo-Soviet. Despite the security requirements, we are working to improve this.

[De Chikoff] Do you see any possibility of a televised debate?

[Satarov] Not in the immediate future. How can you organize a televised debate between the president and the dozen or so candidates who will end up running against him? And if he agrees to debate just one of them, why should it be with Zyuganov when we are seeking to play down this duel aspect?

[De Chikoff] What do you think of Gennadiy Zyuganov?

[Satarov] Which Zyuganov are we talking about? The one who courted businessmen in Davos or the one who whispers in your ear from behind: "Wait until we are in power and then you will see." In my view the problem is not Zyuganov. The danger is the Russian Communist Party. Zyuganov is too weak to keep the party under control. He only exists as a party candidate. The party is comprised of former members of the nomenklatura who did not have the brains, energy, or pragmatism to adapt to the new reforms in Russia. They resent those people who managed to do so. They are ravenous wolves. They would like to take everything back.

[De Chikoff] Do you think that Russian society will let itself be swallowed up like Little Red Riding Hood?

[Satarov] I think it will put up a fight. Those people who today have businesses and property, those who are living the life of Europe and the civilized world will not just sit idly by.

[De Chikoff] What real impact will the Chechnya crisis have in the elections and how do you assess General Dudayev's death in election terms?

[Satarov] The conflict is a very heavy burden. But Dzhokhar Dudayev's death — and I will be frank here — is rather "positive" for the president. In very rough terms, the people in Russia can be divided into two groups: Some want peace at all costs without thinking of the consequences of an immediate, unconditional withdrawal. Others, while they may disapprove of the war, want Russia to win it. The first group, apart from a few individuals, do not view Dudayev's death as a national tragedy. The second group tell themselves that Boris Yeltsin beat out his opponent.

Russia: Putative Yeltsin Deal With Third Force Viewed

MM0605145796 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 May 96 pp 1, 2

[Feature comprising unattributed front-page report entitled "Has 'Third Force' Got Any Force;" followed by page 2 article by Stepan Kiselev: "'Third Force' Has Controlling Block"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The other day Boris Yeltsin began a series of talks with presidential contenders. It was no accident that the first meeting was with Aleksandr Lebed, representative of a coalition which is being formed and which has already been dubbed the "third force."

IZVESTIYA's correspondent has learned from a source close to Yeltsin's election campaign headquarters that in the next few days the president is prepared to meet with Grigoriy Yavlinskiy in order "to put very serious proposals to him." Although the source did not specify precisely what kind of proposals these could be, the first and only one which comes to mind in this case is the government prime minister's post in exchange for the support of Yavlinskiy's voters. In any event the "third force," about which all newspapers have been sounding off lately, does indeed seem to be gathering momentum. [unattributed report ends]

Beginning

At the end of January a document was circulated among State Duma deputies which would not have been worthy of attention had it not been for one thing: An item "On the Transfer of Airborne Troops to New Command" was signed by Deputies Aleksandr Lebed and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy.

Let me remind you that at that time a lively chase was going on in the State Duma for the lone Lebed: Left in parliament without the Congress of Russian Communities' cover, the popular general was a prize catch for any faction. Most of all the democrats feared an alliance between Lebed and the communists, and at one time it seemed that these fears were more than justified: Reports appeared in the press that the general had joined the "People's Power" deputies' group formed by Nikolay Ryzhkov. Suddenly there was a joint statement with Yavlinskiy. Six weeks later there was another — against the denouncement of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha accords, which was also signed by the famous ophthalmologist Svyatoslav Fedorov.

Such meetings between politicians are not accidental, and even then it began to be rumored in State Duma corridors that a coalition was being planned. I say "rumored" because an alliance between a general, a physician, and an economist seemed too exotic even to a parliamentary neighborhood public that has become accustomed to the exotic. Moreover, for a long time the liberal democratic public had been demanding that Yavlinskiy form an alliance with Yegor Gaydar or if the worst came to the worst with Boris Fedorov, who are his "intellectual soulmates," but it did not at all expect his friendship with the "stern general" and the "businessman ophthalmologist."

"We approached each other smoothly and cautiously," Yavlinskiy said. "We realized that our alliance is something unprecedented and did not want the suddenness of its appearance to scare voters."

Movement

What the press calls the "talks and consultations of the 'third force'" do not at all resemble any formal procedure. "We are not communicating according to a protocol and are not signing any memoranda at the end of every meeting," the coalition participants are saying.

Their meetings usually take place away from prying eyes: More often than not Lebed, Fedorov, and Yavlinskiy meet in a State Duma office which is "unexpected by and unknown to the press" and at the weekends in the "Yabloko" faction leader's spacious apartments. These meetings conform not to any overall schedule or plan but merely to the course of intrapolitical events and the logic of the election campaign.

Initially it was the joint declarations written by Yavlinskiy that were primarily discussed at these meetings. What the coalition participants are talking about now is a secret because the talks are taking place only on a one-on-one basis and even the triumvirate members' closest advisors are unaware of the subjects under discussion. All that is known is that the conversations behind closed doors "do not concern the taxes which must be collected from the peasants growing beet" but conversely "constantly revolve around the election campaign: the collection of signatures, registration, and so forth." It is also known what does not exist as of today: there is final document, even in draft form, which could be called a "Joint Declaration" or "Memorandum" and which summarizes all the accords reached between the coalition participants. But such a document is not the biggest obstacle to the eventual formation of an election coalition.

Prospects

At the end of April, six weeks before the presidential election, sociologists recorded a lull in the election campaign that had just gotten under way: The ratings of the two main presidential contenders were stuck around the 25-percent mark. This means that Zyuganov and Yeltsin have already mobilized their natural electorate and a further increase in their supporters can now take place only through outside sources. By all accounts Zyuganov can count on the votes of Aman Tuleyev's and Yuriy Vlasov's supporters. But what reserves can the president count on?

Right at the start of the election campaign Yeltsin stated that the democrats would vote for him because they still "have nowhere else to go." At the same time competition for democrats' votes from Yavlinskiy did not overly trouble Yeltsin: Everybody knew that, while having a real chance of beating Zyuganov and Yeltsin in the second round, Yavlinskiy will simply fail to reach this second round.

Here the prospect of a "Lebed-Fedorov-Yavlinskiy" alliance loomed. This coalition's eventual formation could mix up all the president's cards. It could, but only on one condition — that Yavlinskiy will be the sole candidate of the "third fore." Only then will a considerable proportion of voters who have been tempted by the hope of a victory for "democracy without Yeltsin" give their votes to a coalition representative in the first round. Only then will "Yavlinskiy, who is capable of beating Zyuganov," have a chance of reaching the second round. This is also confirmed by certain sociologists who could in no way be suspected of sympathizing with Yavlinskiy (Yuriy Levada, for example): "If there were a Yavlinskiy-Fedorov-Lebed association Grigoriy Alekseyevich would take second place."

Thus, if the president wants to swell his supporters' ranks through the coalition's electorate — and this seems to be his only reserve — he will have to either smash the planned alliance or reach an agreement with it.

When IZVESTIYA's correspondent approached Yavlinskiy with a request to comment on the rumors of his upcoming meeting with the president, he did not reject the possibility that some proposals could be made to him, stressing that "currently any talks can go ahead only bearing in mind the interests of the coalition as a whole."

In any event, it is the "third force" which now has the controlling block of "voting shares" which could ensure victory for Yeltsin. It is just that the coalition wants to dispose of this block itself.

Forecast

The triumvirate is faced with the following task: "to subtract two from three." Few people now believe that Lebed-Fedorov-Yavlinskiy will be able to carry out this simplest of arithmetical functions.

Fedorov has already set off around the country on an election tour in the role of a presidential candidate.

Yavlinskiy has already started his advertising campaign in Moscow, suggesting that voters choose a new president "without habits which are harmful to the country."

Lebed is already showing journalists his election program (true, it has only just been published), stating that it is not so much an intelligent economist as a hard man that is needed in the role of the country's president.

Each candidate has already rented an office and hired a team of managers to conduct his election campaign.

The election campaign machine has been started up and with every passing day it will become increasingly difficult to stop it. Yet based on a number of circumstantial signs I have grounds to believe that there will be a coalition. Most likely events will develop as follows.

On 5 May Yavlinskiy, Lebed, and Fedorov will take part as election candidates in the drawing of lots, according to whose results they will receive free television airtime. On air Lebed and Fedorov will withdraw their candidature in favor of Yavlinskiy. This will take place, as promised, 15-20 May.

Russia: Zyuganov Discusses Political Position, Election Program

AU0705093496 Munich ARD Television Network in German 2030 GMT 6 May 96

[Interview with Russian Communist presidential candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov in the ARD Bonn studio by Ulrich Wickert in the ARD Hamburg studio on 6 May "shortly before this cast" — Zyuganov answers in Russian, with superimposed German translation — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Wickert] Good evening, Mr. Zyuganov.

[Zyuganov] Good evening.

[Wickert] Mr. Zyuganov, people say you have two faces. Toward your party, you are the good old communist, and toward the West, you are a social democrat. Who are you?

[Zyuganov] I am a Russian citizen, I love my country very much, and I am doing everything I can to restore peace and order in my country. Dozens of journalists are underway at home and abroad who know well that I pursue the same line everywhere. I am seeking the dialogue and good neighborly relations, in particular with Germany, a country that I know quite well and that I highly respect.

[Wickert] Would you as president reduce privatization in Russia?

[Zyuganov] No, on the contrary. We say that big mistakes were made in privatization. However, we are realists, and therefore, we think that the following should be done: Income taxes should be paid, and this will continue. We must take issue with what has happened so far, and companies must do better than they have done in the past. In some cases, companies have been destroyed as a result of privatization. Everything must, of course, be done on a legal basis. We must seek a good proportion between private property and public property to improve economic activities in all areas in the country.

[Wickert] You once said that the Soviet Union should not have disappeared. Do you want to rebuild it?

[Zyuganov] There is a European Union in Europe; where people in the past fought against one another for centuries, passports are no longer controlled today. We propose a voluntary, quiet, democratic renewal of relations, without the sovereignty of individual states being attacked. Economic relations with Belarus and Kazakhstan must be restored. Without such relations, our economy cannot be started again. If this is not done, serious social consequences could be the result. That is why we are pursuing a balanced policy in this area. What is dead cannot be revived. We must look forward into the 21st century.

[Wickert] Very briefly, Mr. Zyuganov: Why does Boris Yeltsin not deserve another chance?

[Zyuganov] Under Yeltsin, production decreased 50 percent. There are almost 6 million refugees, and every fourth citizen lives below the poverty line. Under these conditions, every other European government would have resigned. In the parliamentary elections in December, the government party won only every 10th vote. Yeltsin and his policy are behind this party, and they see very well themselves that with so little confidence, it is impossible to do normal political work.

[Wickert] Thank you very much, Mr. Zyuganov.

[Zyuganov] Thank you, all the best for you. Good bye.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Interviewed on Elections, Chechnya, Women

LD0605221796 St. Petersburg Fifth Channel Television Network in Russian 1310 GMT 6 May 96

[Studio interview with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, presidential candidate and leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, by unidentified female correspondent — live; identified by caption as a paid election broadcast]

[FBIS Summary] In a 40-minute interview, Zhirinovskiy comments on the presidential elections, Chechnya, and Russian women.

Zhirinovskiy says: "In the year 2025 the Russian state will not exist. They have arrived at a world of six poles: the United States and Canada, France and Germany in Europe, and Japan and China in the Far East. Russia already does not exist among this collection of states. In the long term, the space between France, Germany, Japan, and China is meant to become a common space for them. Russia, that is, will be divided up. China will get the Far East, Turkey, and the south — there is a war over this already under way there — and Europe is advancing from the west. As for the Baltic area — why are they so keen to vote for me in Pskov? They can already see Estonian bayonets. Today Estonian, tomorrow NATO. Therefore, 16 June is not just an election. For that reason, it may not even take place. I am 99 percent sure that it will be called off, because a struggle for the very existence of our country is under way."

Zhirinovskiy continues: "In this situation the election needs to be held and it needs to be won by a neutral figure, someone not from the democrats' camp and not from among the Communists. Then everything will calm down. I cannot conduct propaganda about myself now but that is the concept of our party: We are against the Communists and the democrats."

Zhirinovskiy then comments on Chechnya: "We are opposed to any talks. When we stop conducting talks in Chechnya and allow the Armed Forces to eliminate the illegal — and I stress illegal — armed formations, groupings, and fighters, then it will end there."

Zhirinovskiy concludes the interview by discussing his views on Russian women: "The Russian woman is prized in the West for her beauty, goodness, and her ability to be with her family. The Western woman does not love work, housework, washing clothes, children, or marriage. Absolutely not. The Russian woman has lofty, moral qualities in her soul."

Russia: Zhirinovskiy: Democrats Plotting To Wreck Elections

LD0605191096 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Another presidential candidate, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, commented today from St. Petersburg on Aleksandr Korzhakov's statement on postponement of the elections. A report from our correspondents in Russia's second capital.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Svetlana Yakovleva, over video of Zhirinovskiy and delegation arriving, public meeting] Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who arrived for a one-day election campaign visit to St. Petersburg today, had hardly descended the steps of the aircraft before he launched into a statement that the presidential elections will not take place on 16 June. Later, in an interview to an NTV correspondent, he asserted that General Aleksandr Korzhakov's statements about the need to postpone the elections should not be taken as the latter's personal opinion.

[Zhirinovskiy] They are wrecking the elections — Gennadiy Zyuganov, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, Syvatoslav Fedorov, Aleksandr Lebed — they will come to an agreement with Boris Yeltsin about some sort of coalition government, and in parliament their factions will vote to postpone the elections. That is a second option, to cancel them altogether, so to speak. Or they will persuade Zyuganov to stand down.

[Yakovleva] Vladimir Volfovich shared these thoughts with his comrades at arms at a rally near the Kazan Cathedral organized by the local LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] branch on the occasion of their leader's arrival. In a speech lasting one and a half hours, Zhirinovskiy tried to persuade Petersburg citizens not to repeat the mistakes committed at the December elections, when the city voted for the democrats, but to cast their vote for the leader of the only non-venal party, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia.

Vladimir Volfovich managed to draw no more than 1,500 listeners. Most of the passers-by on the Nevskiy Prospekt were totally indifferent to the fiery words of the LDPR leader. There were no other meetings with the St. Petersburg public on the LDPR leader's schedule. Vladimir Volfovich spoke on St. Petersburg Television in the afternoon. He was given half an hour of air time as a presidential candidate. [end recording]

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Certain Elections Not To Be Held

LD0605145596 St. Petersburg Fifth Channel Television Network in Russian 1155 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest candidate for the Russian presidency arrived in St. Petersburg today. While he was still on the steps of the aircraft he said he is 100 percent sure that there will be no presidential election.

[Correspondent V. Shershabova] "Zhirinovskiy Means Victory," and "The Hope of a Bright Future" — such slogans greeted the leader of the people [phrase used of Stalin] as he appeared at the Kazan Cathedral. As befitted such a leader, he was met with flowers and salutations. True, the loudest voices of all were those of the organizers using their bullhorns, and it could be concluded that there were more onlookers at the cathedral than supporters. But Vladimir Volfovich [Zhirinovskiy] works to his own timetable and convictions.

The revelations came one after another. Nostradamus could not compete. It seems that in 20 to 30 years' time our city, the mother of all revolutions, will have ceased to exist completely. True, this time it will be the pushy Estonians and the smiling Finns who will deliver the sentence. We will be virtual idiots unless we vote differently from the last when we gave him, the only honest and incorruptible politician, 3 percent. If we do vote for him, then maybe things will come together immediately.

As always, Zhirinovskiy abused everyone and called on people to trust only him, Nina Andreyeva and [Viktor] Anpilov, the communists who did not sell out.

What was new in the speech of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia leader in St. Petersburg was that in his opinion the threat that the election will be postponed is now growing. If so, Russia will forget about that tool of democracy so keenly supported by Petersburgers for a long time.

Russia: Lebed Not To Withdraw Candidature in Favor of Yavlinskiy

*LD0605160096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1358 GMT 6 May 96*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent By Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 6 (Itar-Tass) — Contrary to some media reports, Russian presidential candidate Aleksandr Lebed is not going to use time on the air on May 15-20 to state that he withdraws his candidature in Grigoriy Yavlinskiy's favour. This is said in a statement of the centre of the candidate's canvassing campaign.

Thus one more participant in the so far non-existent coalition Third force with which Grigory Yavlinsky and Svyatoslav Fedorov are also usually associated refuted the recurring reports that the single candidate is about to emerge.

Lebed himself told a news conference a fortnight ago that the participants in the hypothetic coalition agree on virtually every count, except for who should be the leader.

Presidential candidate Svyatoslav Fedorov, another potential member of the Third force, is not too consistent in his conduct. Stating recently that he is ready to withdraw his candidature in favour of the candidate with the highest rating he still continues a vigorous canvassing campaign, travelling from one region to another.

Presidential candidate Grigoriy Yavlinskiy who is spare on information assures reporters from time to time that he continues consultations with other representatives of the Third force and that such consultations achieve "useful results".

It is characteristic, however, that while the three candidates made several times joint statements on various subjects last month, Lebed reacted alone on the important call of 13 entrepreneurs "to get out of the impasse".

In the statement Lebed made public on April 29 he strongly objected to calling off presidential elections. He said that this step would amount "to the same civil war, but only one month earlier".

It is hard to say what prevents participants in the Third force from proclaiming a coalition and naming the single candidate. Personal ambitions and the lack of a clear criterion for establishing the strongest leader are probably the main and most likely reason. Each of the trio, by all indications, regards himself as quite a suitable sole candidate. Quite possibly, as some observers believe, it may be a clever tactical move. The later the actual alignment of forces become known, the less time the main rivals will have for organising an effective propaganda counteraction. So far the competition in the election campaign is mainly between Boris Yeltsin and Gennadiy Zyuganov.

And, finally, some do not rule out the version that the Third force will not emerge at all as its potential participants, not being certain of victory deep down their hearts, are barganing backstage with other candidates. Yeltsin already had meetings with Lebed and Yavlinskiy. The content of these meeting can only be judged by from terse statements of the latter two. Nobody knows what they have omitted.

Russia: Independent Candidate Shakkum Sends Message to Voters

*MM0705102996 Moscow TRUD-7 in Russian
5-11 May 96 p 3*

[Undated message from independent presidential candidate Martin Shakkum: "Esteemed Russians, Dear Fellow Citizens!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] I am sincerely grateful to you for your trust and support. Almost 1.5 million Russian voters put their faith in my program to extricate the country from the crisis, put their faith in me, and nominated me as a candidate for the post of Russian Federation president.

But this decision frightened the current "authorities." Only the fact that the Russian Federation Supreme Court's insistently demanded of the Russian Central Electoral Commission to register me, Martin Shakkum, as a candidate for the post of Russian Federation president, made an official act of recognition possible. I am pleased that I will now be able to represent your interests and your will as your independent candidate.

Unfortunately, only a few of the current Russian Federation presidential candidates are genuinely independent. Those who are in power very much want to give Russian voters only one choice: between the bad and the very bad. That is why they are trying to exclude candidates whom they find objectionable and unruly. It is no accident that cynical "bargaining" with candidates is going on almost openly: Who will give the votes of "his" voters to whom, who will "unite" with whom, and what they will get for doing this But during this nobody is asking for the consent of the actual voters.

I guarantee to you that the votes pledged to me will never be the subject of bargaining with a single political side and will never be "handed over" or, more precisely, betrayed.

I will fight to the end in the presidential election. Because in my view participation in this election is not a means to secure my own personal future (as some people maybe want to do) but a means to help my country and my fellow citizens. To give up the fight means to deprive those of you who saw me as your leader of their chance.

I promise that I will most carefully study all your instructions, expectations, wishes, and recommendations. They are what forms the basis of my political election platform and my practical actions. I will try to ensure that all state decisions in the country are made in the light of your demands and in the light of the Russian people's public opinion.

I would be grateful if you, esteemed voters, would write to the following address: 109240, Moscow, Kotelnicheskaya Embankment 17, Martin Shakkum's Public Reception Room.

Once again — thank you for your support!

As chairman of the recently founded Socialist People's Party of Russia I would also like to take the opportunity to greet you, dear fellow countrymen, on the recent May Day, the working people's traditional holiday. We have made their interests the basis of our party program and we will carry it out when we get into power.

As a citizen and as the son of a frontline soldier I wish all Russians a happy Victory Day! I believe that in the not too distant future Russia will celebrate its new victory — a genuinely great rebirth!

[signed] Martin Shakkum, your Russian Federation presidential candidate

Russia: Television Airtime Distribution Schedule Detailed

MK0705084896 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 6 May 96 p 1

[Report by Gleb Cherkasov: "The Central Electoral Commission Has Distributed Air Time Among Contenders. In the Evening of 14 June, Gennadiy Zyuganov Will Speak to Voters Twice"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On Sunday [5 May], by drawing lots, the Central Electoral Commission [TsIK] distributed air time between registered candidates for president. It will be recalled that, according to the TsIK instruction, free time can be given only on the state-owned nationwide television channels (ORT [Channel One], "Russia" [VGTRK], and the St. Petersburg channel) during the period of 14 May to 14 June. There will not be much free campaigning on state television, just 10 minutes in the morning and in the evening on both ORT and VGTRK. The campaign month was divided into two periods: 14 May to 3 June, 4 June to 14 June. Each of the contenders is authorized for 10 minutes in the first period and 5 minutes in the second. On the St. Petersburg channel, each of the candidates will be given half an hour once in the evening. Some time was also reserved for nonregistered candidates who are currently contesting the TsIK's decision in the Supreme Court.

Boris Yeltsin received the chance to speak to his compatriots on ORT on the mornings of 21 May and 6 June and on the evenings of 30 May and 11 June; on VGTRK his chance comes on the mornings of 27 May and 10 June and on the evenings of 29 May and 7 June. On the St. Petersburg channel it comes on 29 May. His main rival, Gennadiy Zyuganov, was a bit more lucky. He will be given free air time on ORT on the mornings of 27 May and 13 June and on the evenings of 3 June and 14 June. On VGTRK he appears on the morning of 17 May and 13 June and in the evening of 15 May and 6 June. On the St. Petersburg channel his chance comes on 14 June. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, will be campaigning on ORT on the mornings of 22 May and 5 June and on the evenings of 22 May and 13 June; on VGTRK he campaigns on the evenings of 24 May and 6 June and on the mornings of 29 May and 6 June. On the St. Petersburg channel he speaks on 22 May. Aleksandr Lebed will be propagating his ideas on ORT on the mornings of 31 May and 14 June and on the evenings of 21 May and 4 June. On VGTRK he speaks on the mornings of 24 May and 11 June and on the evenings of 23 May and 13 June; and on the St. Petersburg channel he speaks on 15 May. Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, his probable partner in the coalition, will speak about his electoral program on ORT on the evenings of 15 May and 6 June and on the mornings of 16 May and 11 June; on VGTRK he airs on the mornings of 15 May and 6 June and on the evenings of 21 May and 13 June On the St. Petersburg channel his message goes out on 5 June. The third participant in the hypothetical "third force," Svyatoslav Fedorov, will be given air on ORT on the mornings of 28 May and 4 June and on the evenings of 16 May and 11 June; on VGTRK, on the mornings of 16 May and 7 June and on the evenings of 16 May and 11 June, and, on the St. Petersburg channel, on 4 June. USSR Ex-President Mikhail Gorbachev will speak on ORT on the mornings of 30 May and 11 June and on the evenings of 31 May and 5 June; on VGTRK, on the mornings of 30 May and 5 June and on the evenings of 30 May and 10 June, and on the St. Petersburg channel, on 10 June. Aman Tuleyev will be given air on ORT on the mornings of 29 May and 5 June and on the evenings of 28 May and 10 June, on VGTRK, on the evenings of 28 May and 5 June and on the mornings of 20 May and 7 June, and on the St. Petersburg channel on 11 June.

The limited air time allotted by the television companies and the TsIK for the electioneering is compelling candidates to search for other forms of people persuasion. Possibly, priority will be given to direct contacts with voters, the canvassing by activists at homes and in the streets, and the organization of meetings, rallies, and other "direct action moves." Only Gennadiy Zyuganov, Boris Yeltsin, and — partially — Vladimir Zhirinovskiy are ready for participation in such an election campaign. All the other candidates will have to learn how to speak quickly and intelligibly so as to be able to pour out their hearts within a few minutes.

Also, yesterday, the Supreme Court received a complaint by Grigoriy Yavlinskiy and Svyatoslav Fedorov demanding that the TsIK's instruction "On the Allocation of Air Time" be declared "null and void and not liable for practical use." In the opinion of the candidates, the commission exceeded its powers since some provisions of the instruction "restrict the constitutional rights of the contenders for the presidential post."

Russia: Role of Money in Presidential Elections Viewed

964E1077A Moscow INTERFAKS-AIF in Russian 8-14 Apr 96 No 14, pp 1, 2

[Article by Taisiya Nechiporenko and Vasiliy Shulman: "Money That Will Decide the Fate of Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **No one has any doubt that not only big money, but huge amounts of money will be put to work in the presidential campaign. What specific sums will be thrown into the presidential elections we may only surmise, but neither one side nor the other will balk at the price. Neither the production structures, nor the commercial banks will be able to remain on the sidelines in this struggle.**

Under the Law—All Are Equal

In order for the elections not to turn into a struggle of capital, the law on presidential elections provides for a strict procedure of financing the electoral campaigns and fundraising. The primary condition is that the candidate must use only those monies for his campaign which he has received in his electoral fund, deposited in a special term account opened at a branch of the RF Sberbank [Russian Federation Savings Bank]. Moreover, the maximal sum of a presidential candidate's expenditures at the expense of the monies in the fund cannot exceed 14.5 billion rubles (R). Thus, the law creates certain conditions for provision of equality of financial capacities of the candidates.

Electoral funds may be formulated at the expense of funds allocated to a candidate for preelectoral campaigning by Tsentrizbirkom [Central Electoral Commission], the candidate's own funds, the funds of an electoral association, block or initiative group which has nominated the candidate, as well as voluntary contributions of individuals and legal entities.

At the same time, contributions are not permitted to the electoral funds, specifically, from foreign states, organization and citizens; international, state or military organizations; charitable and religious associations, or Russian legal entities with foreign participation, if the relative share of foreign capital in their statutory fund exceeds 30 percent.

Moreover, contributions from a single legal entity must not exceed R288,750,000, and from an individual—R2,887,500.

It is presumed that the state will grant each presidential candidate no more than R200 million for conducting his preelectoral campaign. The rest of the money they will have to raise themselves.

There Will Be No Shortage of Sponsors

Understandably, the presidential candidates have varying financial potential. We may judge this even by how the past parliamentary elections were financed.

The Communist Party received around R1.5 billion for elections to the State Duma. Moreover, legal entities gave it only R145.5 million, and individuals—over R200 million. The rest came from the party's own funds. Among its almost 30 "contributors," the rayon party organizations were most prominent. The LDPR [Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia] had over 60 sponsors, of which 49 transferred R78 million each into the fund. The party collected somewhere on the order of R10 billion.

Numerous structures which had the word, "suprimax" in their title mobilized for the support of "Yabloko." Altogether, the association was supported by over 40 "sponsors," who contributed on the order of R5 billion.

The Congress of Russian Communities (CRC), which nominated A. Lebed as candidate for president, was supported by around 30 organizations in the elections to the State Duma, who contributed over R1 billion to the CRC.

Around 100 organizations contributed over R8 billion to the account of the NDR [Russia is Our Home]. In general, the sponsors of the primary candidates participating in the parliamentary elections are obvious. Those who supported the NDR, "Russia's Democratic Choice" and many others will "go over" to B. Yeltsin. Then again, the current president will clearly not have any problems with financing.

The Most "Monetary" Candidate

Let the business circles and bankers speak of their nonparticipation in financing the presidential campaign—who will believe them? No matter how you look at it, their very existence is at stake. After all, the presidential elections are a struggle for power between two systems. And if today it is more or less clear what the reelection of Yeltsin would mean for the business world, the leader of the Communists will remain a "cat in the bag" until the very end, and potentially a very dangerous one. So it is better to share the money today than to lose everything tomorrow.

Business is striving toward stability—economic and political. Its personification today in the public consciousness is only the currently acting president. Perhaps this is specifically why Yeltsin, in the opinion of experts and the majority of Russians, will receive the most financial support from the entrepreneurial structures. This, specifically, is evidenced by the data of a sociological survey of 50 experts, conducted by the "Vox Populi" service for the study of public opinion at the request of the weekly publication INTERFAKS-AIF. Thirty-four experts ranked Yeltsin first in terms of financial capacities, while only four picked Gennadiy Zyuganov and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. It is also a regularity that not one expert ranked Yeltsin third (see table). At the same time, the richest candidate, the entrepreneur Vladimir Bryntsalov, in the opinion of the experts, can expect very limited support.

At the same time, we must consider the fact that potential financial capabilities of the candidates, despite all the legislative limitations, will become real during the elections. It is clear to all that the law will not be able to limit the preelectoral expenditures of the candidates. There are numerous opportunities for unofficially financing an electoral campaign.

In this situation, the Communists, recognizing the limitations of their finances as compared with the potential of the current president, are preparing to organize the strictest control over the expenditures of their competitor, so as to hinder him in utilizing this advantage. CPSU [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] observers are already preparing to collect compromising material. Taking into consideration how remarkably well-informed the opposition is about Kremlin matters, we may presume that its activity will create many problems for the supporters of the current president in expenditure of funds.

Responses to question: "List the names of three candidates for president who receive the greatest financial support from entrepreneurs."

Candidate	1st response, number of times mentioned	2nd response, number of times mentioned	3rd response, number of times mentioned
Yeltsin	34	14	-
Zhirinovskiy	4	14	10
Zyuganov	4	12	10
Yavlinskiy	1	10	9
Lebed	0	0	3
Fedorov, Sv.	0	0	3
Bryntsalov	0	1	0

CIS: Central Asian Leaders Consolidate Interstate Relations

LD0605192996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1559 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [place and date not given] (INTERFAX) Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan Nursultan Nazarbayev, Askar Akayev and Islam Karimov have signed an agreement on formation of a tripartite peace-making battalion under the U.N. aegis and its training within the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace program. The agreement was signed on results of their Bishkek summit.

Other documents signed at the summit include an agreement on fulfillment of the treaty on common economic space, an agreement on production cooperation, a statement on the use of water energy resources and a resolution on the "Central Asia: Integration Problems" magazine.

The three presidents gave a news conference led by summit chairman, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev. He said all the signed documents were well prepared and did not pose any problems.

The summit was a success despite the fact the president dealt with uneasy problems of goods prices, their sales on the regional market and mutual payments.

The presidents instructed their governments to prepare "for fulfillment of the decisions" within a month, said Nazarbayev.

President of Kyrgyzstan Askar Akayev said in response to an Interfax question, Central Asian production cooperation is possible, although it leaves behind the legal basis.

He reminded that Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have lifted customs barriers and much increased the trading amount. They have established good partner relations with Uzbekistan. The president cited as an example the car plant in the Uzbek town of Andizhan, which made several orders to machine-building plants of Kyrgyzstan. A joint venture is being formed by Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to process uranium ore.

There is plenty of projects to be fulfilled at the level of the regional council of ministers, said Akayev.

President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov said he welcomes integration of the Central Asian countries and thinks the Bishkek summit confirms there is no alternative to regional integration. He said the documents signed in the Kyrgyz capital prove normal progress of the integration.

The remaining problems of customs barriers, mutual payments and mutual convertibility of national currencies must be solved, and the presidents took an obligation to do this in the near future, said Karimov.

He stressed the remaining problems "must not hamper normal communication between the neighboring peoples."

Asked about his attitude to the quadripartite integration agreement, Karimov said the Commonwealth of Independent States has not exhausted its potential and the Commonwealth documents will start working.

Criticism of the Commonwealth is correct, "but who prevents us from implementing the documents?" said the president.

As for cooperation in the Central Asian region, Karimov does not think it will create any problems.

Bearing in mind the Central Asian countries have become U.N. members, they should have a possibility to participate in peace-making and the servicemen of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan should have a chance for experience and military training, said President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev.

"God forbid, but if we have any conflicts in our region, we must settle them by ourselves," he said.

CIS: Peacekeeping Forces Issue Statement on Tajikistan Situation

LD0605202896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1804 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe, 6 May (ITAR-TASS) — The situation in Tajikistan encourages actions of bandit formations in various districts of Tajikistan. This is said in a statement by the CIS collective peacekeeping forces in the Republic, which was circulated today. The document was made public in connection with the terrorist act carried out on the Dushanbe-Nurek road in the area of the Chormagzak [as received] pass during the night of 5 May; a group of 20 fighters carried out a bandit attack on a convoy carrying civilians.

As a result of the terrorist act, four people were wounded and six killed, including two servicemen of the CIS collective peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan.

"Ways of settling the inter-Tajik problem peacefully, which have taken shape, do not suit certain political circles," the statement stresses, "and they are doing everything to exacerbate the situation and to frighten the Republic's civilian population with terrorist acts."

In the opinion of the command, it is obvious that "the same political circles have nothing to gain from the stabilizing peacekeeping role of Russian servicemen in the process of settling the inter-Tajik problem." The command recalls that last year 10 servicemen of the collective peacekeeping forces fell victim to terrorist acts in Dushanbe alone.

The document expresses confidence that the country's law-enforcement bodies will take the most immediate measures to seek out and punish the criminals. The command warned that in order to prevent such terrorist acts in future it "will be forced to take appropriate measures."

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 7 May

LD0705072096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0515 GMT 7 May 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 7 (ITAR-TASS) — Follows a review of Tuesday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated May 7.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on the arrest of a British intelligence agent in Moscow. Counterintelligence personnel arrested the agent in the act of a regular communication session with fixed-post spies. According to Aleksandr Zdanovich, spokesman for the Federal Security Service [FSB], varius spying equipment was found and confiscated from the agent during a search.

During the very first interrogations, the arrested confessed his affiliation with the British secret service and described the circumstances under which he had been recruited. The agent also gave detailed testimony on the course of his cooperation with the British secret service. Immediately following the announcement of the arrest of a British spy, the Russian Foreign Ministry lodged a resolute protest with Andrew Wood, the British Ambassador in Moscow.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on Russian sportsman Vasili Lozhkin's solo round-the-world cycling tour. The newspaper reports that Lozhkin was due to arrive in Atlanta by the time when Olympic Games are to open. However, shortly after the sportsman set out from Brest, he disappeared somewhere in Colombia in Uraba Region, where militants and drug-dealing mafia operate.

ROSSIISKAYA GAZETA on the situation on the State securities market. The newspaper carries an interview which Ivan Serebrennikov, Chairman of the Board of the National Space Bank took from Bella Zlatkis, Head of the Russian Finance Ministry's Department for Securities and the Financial Market.

Touching upon the situation on the market of State securities, the problem of non-productive uses of funds obtained on this market, Zlatkis pointed out that a way can be only one — to borrow now at 50-60 percent at annum, direct funds to production and obtain a double return through taxes. Tomorrow it will be cheaper to borrow.

According to Zlatkis, "the entire system of domestic borrowings has been conceived proceeding precisely from such a linkage".

"I do not think that a 1997 budget deficit has increased substantially as a resutl of borrowings that we practise by way of routine. Quite a different matter is that the domestic debt now comprises a lion's share of Central Bank credits, which we borrowed in the past years — about 70,000,000 million rouble — at a rather high interest. It is those credits that add to our State domestic debt".

ROSSIISKIYE VESTI on measures to rehabilitate the clergy and believers, who were subjected to unfounded represssions.

Professor Vladimir Naumov comments in the newspaper on the Russian President's Decree to this effect. Naumov points out that the Church and its flock were a purely ideololgical opponent of Soviet power. "This is why the Bolsheviks' very programme envisaged the elimination of the Church as an institution and full eradication of religious faith", Naumov pointed out.

ROSSIIKSAYA GAZETA on the Presidential Decree on the publication of a Grand Russian Encyclopaedia. The newspaper reports that it will be possible to subscribe to the Encyclopaedia already this year. The idea of such an encyclopaedia originated several years ago. In January 1995, the project was approved by a Presidential instruction. The Head of State signed a Decree on the incorporation of expenditure on editorial and publishing preparations into a 1997 draft Federal budget.

IZVESTIA on migrants in Belgorod region. The newspaper reports that more than 23,000 migrants arrived in Belgorod Region last year — 230 arrivals per 10,000 local residents. This was four times as many as the country's average. Even Krasnodar and Stavropol, which are traditionally attractive to immigrants, now receive a lesser number of migrants.

Russia: Federal Security Service Spokesman on Arrest of British Spy

LD0605165596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Studio announcer Aleksandr Gurnov] British diplomats were today woken by a report that a man caught red-handed spying for British intelligence was arrested in Moscow. [passage omitted]

[Begin Aleksandr Zdanovich recording] The man admitted collaboration with the British during the first few interrogation sessions. He described in detail the circumstances of his recruitment. He also described the people he used to meet, people who were working with him. Diplomats turned out to be among them. I will call them diplomats in inverted commas, for they were working under diplomatic cover in the embassy of Great Britain. [end recording]

[Gurnov] Aleksandr Zdanovich refused to describe the man in greater detail, who he is, where he is from, how long he has been working for the British, and what damage he succeeded in causing his own country.

[Begin Zdanovich recording] An investigation is underway and criminal proceedings have been instituted in accordance with Article 64 of the Russian Federation's criminal code — betrayal of the motherland through espionage. It is natural that when cases of this kind are dealt with, the principle of the secrecy of investigation comes into operation and many details that are already known to the Federal Security Service and individual investigators will naturally not find their way to the press for some time yet, and I do not want to dwell on this now.

[Gurnov] The head of the Russian Federal Security Service Public Relations Center decided to dwell on something else. Having castigated the media, which, according to him, do at times allow themselves to state that our counterintelligence has declined and that no professionals are left in its ranks, Aleksandr Zdanovich noted that the fact of the detention of the spy, caught red-handed, speaks for itself.

[Begin recording] [Zdanovich] Surely each and every citizen of ours can be clear without any commentaries that our counterintelligence people have fulfilled their duties and worked with utmost professionalism. Otherwise none of this would have happened, as it were.

[Unidentified correspondent] Andrew Wood, Britain's ambassador to Russia, was summoned to the Russian Foreign Ministry today to hear a resolute protest concerning the illegal activities of a number of employees of British special services using the embassy as their cover. The ambassador was made aware that a number of the embassy's employees were declared personae non grata for activities incompatible with diplomatic status and that they were liable to be deported from the country. [end recording]

[Gurnov] Those working for the British embassy in Moscow had no contacts with the press today. Moreover, they tried to enter and leave the embassy by the back door, opposite the magnificent exit overlooking the Kremlin.

Russia: PNG'd British Embassy Staff Are 'Resident Agents'

MM0605172196 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 7 May 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksey Chukurov under "What People Are Talking and Arguing About Today" rubric: "Resident Agent's Failure"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday the Federal Security Service [FSB] reported the arrest of a citizen of Russia who had cooperated with British intelligence. Counterintelligence officers caught the spy red-handed conducting a regular communications session with resident agents. According to Aleksandr Zdanovich, official spokesman for the FSB, a variety of espionage equipment was discovered and confiscated from the agent during a search.

Under initial interrogation the arrested person admitted his involvement with the British intelligence service and described the circumstances in which he had been recruited. The agent also made a detailed deposition on the course of his cooperation with foreign intelligence.

Right after the announcement of the British spy's arrest the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a resolute protest to Andrew Wood, Britain's ambassador in Moscow. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke of the inadmissibility of British SIS [Secret Intelligence Service] cadre personnel using the embassy as a "cover" for conducting intelligence operations on Russian territory. At the same time an entire group of British diplomats has been declared "persona non grata" and will be expelled from the country. These embassy staff members were simultaneously employed as Moscow resident agents for the SIS and maintained contact with the agent detained by the FSB.

A high-ranking Russian Foreign Intelligence Service staff member told KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's correspondent that in its work the SIS employs the conventional espionage practice of using Britain's official diplomatic and trade missions as cover for its agents.

The SIS used to be a department of MI6, British military intelligence, but this intelligence service is now directly subordinate to the country's prime minister. It is precisely the British Foreign Office that is the main "cover" for SIS employees. Moreover, actual funding for the SIS and for this intelligence service's operations is channeled precisely through the Foreign Office.

Russia: Karasin: Spy Episode Must Not 'Worsen' UK-Russian Relations

LD0605175696 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] We are yet to know how many British diplomats Russia will expel. According to some reports, it will expel four, according to others a dozen. But if more than two are expelled, this will be a major diplomatic scandal since the Cold war. We have just received a commentary by the Russian Foreign Ministry in connection with the events.

[Begin G. Karasin recording, head of the Information and Press Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry] We want, we hope, and we will do everything necessary not to allow this incident to have a negative effect on our relations with Great Britain. These things happen in the international diplomatic practice from time to time. The main thing is that the situation must not be dramatized and that this incident must not be allowed to influence our interstate relations. [end recording]

Russia: Karasin Dismisses Diplomat Expulsion Story as 'Concoction'

LD0705105796 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 7 May 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast presented by Svetlana Sorokina]

[FBIS Translated Text] Grigoriy Karasin, director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department said in an interview for Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy radio station that reports of the expulsion of nine British diplomats from the country were a concoction [Russian: Vymysel]. I do not know the source of this information, said Karasin. He stressed that the main thing now was to ensure that the incident does not impede the normal development of relations between Russia and Britain.

Russia: Nine British Diplomats Declared Persona Non Grata

LD0705085096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0830 GMT 7 May 96

[ITAR-TASS correspondent Olga Semenova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 May — The British ambassador to Moscow has been given a list of nine British agents who have been working under diplomatic cover and who have been declared persona non grata. Aleksandr Zdanovich, acting head of the public relations center of the Russian Federal Security Service, told ITAR-TASS today. He stressed that the activity of every listed intelligence agent was detailed in the message handed to the ambassador and documentary evidence was given on their contacts with the Russian citizen who was arrested for spying for Britain.

Russia: ITAR-TASS: Britain Will Retaliate for Diplomats' Expulsion

LD0605150996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1416 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline as received] — An official spokesman for the British Foreign Office refused to comment on today's developments. In an answer to ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Urban in London, he just said that accusing British diplomats of using their diplomatic status to cover their spying activities "is completely unjustified."

However, ITAR-TASS learned from confidential sources, London "has started consultations on this incident." The sources believe that if Moscow resorts to expelling British diplomats, "commensurate measures will be taken against Russian diplomatic staff in Great Britain."

Russia: Primakov Interviewed on Strasbourg Meetings

MM0705091696 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 7 May 96 p 7

["Topical Interview" with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov by Yelena Ovcharenko; date and place not given: "Primakov's May Day in Strasbourg a Hit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Strasbourg, Moscow — Once upon a time the proletariat of all countries used to unite at the start of May. On this occasion the holiday was marked by the leading diplomats of 38 European states who began the month with a meeting in Strasbourg. The official session of the foreign ministers' committee was preceded by their informal meeting which lasted an unprecedentedly long time. [Foreign] Minister Primakov was questioned for four hours by his colleagues on events in Russia and on Russian foreign policy. The leaders of the diplomatic departments were so pleased with this long and detailed dialogue that they agreed to hold similar unofficial conversations in the future too.

[Ovcharenko] And will you be doing a solo turn every time, Yevgeniy Maksimovich?

[Primakov] As I told my colleagues, I hope that in the future I shall be one of the people asking the questions. But to be serious for a moment, this is the first session of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in which our country has participated as a full-fledged member. It is no exaggeration to say that Russia was the dominant theme.

[Ovcharenko] What questions were the ministers primarily interested in?

[Primakov] Mainly they were concerned with how firm Russia's progress along the path of democratization is and how solid its determination to be an organic part of the Council of Europe is. A considerable proportion of the time was devoted to Chechnya. The president's plan for a settlement in this region has produced a good response on the continent. Some of my colleagues are afraid, admittedly, that it could be wrecked. It was necessary to explain that there are objective factors such as the gunmen's terrorist actions, which provoke a response. As for the subjective notion that some people in Russia want to bring the war to a victorious conclusion, I explained to my colleagues how this does not correspond or corresponds only slightly to the facts.

I was asked how things will develop after Dudayev's death. It is hard to answer this because the situation is uncertain. It will take time before it becomes clear which forces are really controlling the situation on the other side.

The ministers asked about everything: the state of affairs in Russia and, for example, our attitude toward the extended interpretation of European security including the Mediterranean. We also talked about the progress of the civilian part of the operation in Bosnia.

[Ovcharenko] Russia has still not achieved the European standards on a whole series of problems. On the question of the death penalty, for example, it is not obvious that the time has come for us to do this....

[Primakov] We have been kept waiting in the Council of Europe antechamber a long time on the grounds of compatibility with the rest of Europe in the sphere of democracy. It is not entirely correct to put the question in these terms. It is necessary to look at the dynamism of our development. But the European standards cannot be achieved overnight and perhaps they should not be achieved in all respects. These same standards vary from country to country. For example, the death penalty has not been abolished in Britain. The main thing is that we have chosen the path of rapprochement with democratic Europe — and we will not turn back from it.

[Ovcharenko] How serious are the fears that, on the eve of the U.S. elections, the [U.S.] President will withdraw the U.S. contingent from Bosnia for purely domestic political reasons?

[Primakov] Very many people share that fear now. The Americans view most problems in terms of their elections. In fact the military part of the operation is over but the civilian stage as defined by the Paris agreements is still ahead. Creation is not easier than commanding troops but it has to be done.

[Ovcharenko] What foreign policy problems could as sensitive for President Yeltsin as Bosnia is for Clinton?

[Primakov] I shall answer this question in a different way: In my opinion the president cannot be blamed for any of the existing problems. His very productive foreign trips, the success of the G-8 meeting in Moscow, and the positive development of relations with the CIS countries, which I hope will also become apparent in the near future — those are my arguments.

Russia: Grachev Meets Chinese Defense Official in Moscow

LD0605121396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The official visit to Russia of a Chinese military delegation is continuing. At a meeting with our military leadership a protocol on cooperation between the defense ministries of the two countries is being prepared, a most important document which carries forward the process begun in Beijing a week ago.

[Correspondent Babayan] [Russian Defense Minister] Pavel Grachev met with General Fu Quanyou, chief of the general staff of the Chinese PLA, at the Russian Defense Ministry in Moscow today. The Chinese delegation is on an official visit to Russia and intends to visit the general staff's military academy, the Kubinka air base, and the naval academy in St. Petersburg. The meeting between Grachev and Fu Quangyou took place behind closed doors, but before that the Russian defense minister indicated the range of issues the two sides will discuss.

[Begin Grachev recording] There is the agreement on strengthening confidence-building measures in the military sphere in the border area — the one the five presidents signed in Shanghai — and our talks on reducing armed forces in the border area. The third item — and this is the most important one for us in the military departments — is on our future bilateral military cooperation. [end recording]

[Babayan] An hour earlier the Chinese delegation was met by Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the Russian general staff. According to him, a final document — a protocol on cooperation between the Russian and Chinese Defense Ministries — is due to be signed. This protocol will be a continuation of a similar agreement signed back in 1993.

Russia: ROK Foreign Minister, Vladimir Lukin Talk to Reporters

SK0705030296 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in Korean 1200 GMT 6 May 96

[Talk from the "Today's World" program: "ROK Foreign Minister's Visit to Russia;" passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ROK Foreign Minister Kong No-myong is currently in Moscow on a visit to Russia.

Yesterday, ROK Foreign Minister met with Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the State Duma, Russia's house of representatives.

Foreign Minister Kong No-myong and Chairman Vladimir Lukin held a news conference after meeting behind closed doors.

Answering a question on how he assessed the meeting with Chairman Vladimir Lukin, Foreign Minister Kong No-myong said:

[Kong] "Chairman Lukin is a Korean peoples' friend whom I have known since I served in Russia as ROK ambassador. Quite some time has passed since I met him last. When I was about to leave Russia, Chairman Lukin was appointed as ambassador to the United States. Thus, we had not met for about four or five years. We both talked about many things that we missed from the past. We also frankly exchanged views on domestic issues of the ROK and Russia, as well as on international relations. Our meeting was very useful."

Foreign Minister Kong served as first ROK Ambassador to Russia after the two nations established diplomatic relations. Answering a question on what progress he thinks has been made in the standard of living of the Russian people, he stated:

[Kong] "I came to Russia in January 1992. Since that time, Russia has made great progress. Russia has overcome a great deal of confusion in the early stage of the process in which Russia's planned economy was turned into a market economy. In particular, Russia brought inflation and the foreign exchange rate under control. Russia's economy is showing positive growth and development."

Answering a question on how economic relations are developing between Russia and the ROK, Foreign Minister Kong said:

[Kong] "The ROK-Russia relations have substantively developed. During the last year alone, the trade volume between the two nations amounted to $3.3 billion, showing 51 percent growth from the previous year."

Answering questions by reporters, Chairman Vladimir Lukin said that Russia is interested in concluding a treaty on [word indistinct] between North and South Korea, and that a political solution to the question of the Korean peninsula, which has been divided into the North and South, is of great significance.

Stating that Russia and the ROK showed differences in policies concerning the peninsula, Chairman Lukin pointed out that the agreement on who should participate in the process of resolving the problem, in addition to when and how, are the most important diplomatic issues.

Lukin added that with a view to comprehensively and [word indistinct] resolving the question of the peninsula, Russia proposed a long time ago the convocation of an international conference. Representatives from the DPRK, the ROK, China, the United states, Russia, Japan, the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency, should participate in this conference. However, this Russian proposal has failed to receive any response.

In April, the ROK and the United States proposed the four-way talks, excluding the United Nations, Russia and Japan. Vladimir Lukin stressed that the issue raised by Russia should be continuously discussed with the ROK and the U.S. side.

Lukin said that during the meeting with Foreign Minister Kong No-myong, the issue of promoting ties between the parliaments of Russia and the ROK was discussed, and that the two sides agreed to continuously and actively push ahead with such ties, which are satisfactory even today. To be more specific, he noted that a delegation of the Russian parliament will visit the ROK in the summer.

Russia: Ignatenko: Russia Wants Major Role in Korean Settlement

LD0605150396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1314 GMT 6 May 96

[By Aleksandr Valiyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 6 (Itar-Tass) — Russia should make an impressive contribution to ensuring peace on the Korean Peninsula and play a substantial role in the inter-Korean dialogue, Russian vice-premier Vitaliy Ignatenko said at a meeting with South Korean Foreign Minister Kong No-myong here on Monday.

The talks, held in a friendly atmosphere, were attended by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Mikhail Fradkov and Russian Ambassador to the Korean Republic Georgiy Kunadze.

The meeting centred on ensuring a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, pulling the inter-Korean dialogue out of the dead-end and on Russian participation in this process.

In 1994, Russia came out with an initiative of holding an international conference to settle comprehensively problems of the peninsula, divided into the North and the South and hostile to each other.

However, this proposal has not found a positive response from other participants. For instance South Korea and the United States called on North Korea last month to agree to a quadripartite meeting — with the participation of Seoul, Washington, Pyongyang and Beijing.

Moscow disagrees with this approach. Ignatenko noted at today's meeting that "Russia's experience, its position and geographic location cannot be replaced with anything".

Panov noted that the problem is bigger, and it should be settled in a comprehensive way. Otherwise, one question, for instance a nuclear issue, will bring others in its tail.

In the opinion of the South Korean side, a quadripartite meeting means only the start of a major dialogue on security in North Eastern Asia, which can be joined by Russia and Japan with time.

The North and the South should play the key role in settling the Korean question, Kong noted. However, North Korea refuses to meet halfway South Korea and insists on talks only with the U.S.

The South Korean minister said that Seoul hopes for Moscow's support in establishing contacts with the North.

Kong described a desire to resume economic relations between Russia and North Korea (for which purpose Pyongyang was visited last month by a Russian government delegation led by Ignatenko) as assistance in stabilising the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Replying to a proposal by Fradkov to involve South Korean capital for envigorating Russian-North Korean cooperation and for joint deliveries of manufactured goods to third countries, the minister said that the South Korean government now encourages investments in the North Korean economy, guided by "goodwill to improve inter-Korean relations".

Russia: Iran Said Ready To Ask Russia To Build 5 Power Projects

MK0605140596 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 6 May 96 p 4

[Report by Yevgeniy Spiridonov: "Russian Power Machinery Manufacturers Have No Competition in Iran"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iran is ready to enlist the services of Russian power machinery manufacturing enterprises, design and scientific-research organizations, and foreign trade associations to build five power projects at a total cost of more than $500 million. This intention is reflected in the memorandum of understanding between Iran's Ministry of Industries and the Roskommash [Russian Committee on Machine-Building] signed in Tehran in the course of a visit to Iran by a Russian delegation of machine builders. Roskommash Chairman Anatoliy Ogurtsov stated during a meeting in Moscow with Iran's Ambassador to Russia, Mr. Safari, that there are no obstacles from the Russian side which could prevent the participation of its enterprises and organizations in designing and building the Azerbaijan thermal power station and the Khini-Mini, Sazban, Pa-Alam, and Gotvand hydropower stations.

Your SEGODNYA correspondent has been told in the Roskommash foreign cooperation administration that commercial proposals that Russian enterprises are drawing up in response to requests of the Iranian side also deal with modernizing power facilities currently operating in Iran with the participation of the Moshanir engineering company, which works under the auspices of Iran's Ministry of Energy. The Iranian MSA company stated in the memorandum on understanding its intention to create together with Russian enterprises joint manufacture of drilling equipment and equipment for well heads. The Wagan Pars rail car plant expressed readiness to cooperate with Russia's machine builders in the production of wheel pairs, brake systems, and metro cars.

The memorandum also says that the Russian side is interested in putting on the Iranian market of agricultural machinery road-building equipment and equipment for gas pipeline construction. The Russian joint-stock company Niineftemash and the Iranian Azar-AB company intend to cooperate in designing oil, gas, and petrochemical equipment.

Roskommash foreign cooperation administration chiefs think that the capacity of the Iranian market of machine-building products is big enough. However, the prospects of Russian producers' entering it would depend on the funding arrangement to be worked out in the course of negotiations between the sides. The final forms of payment and mutual settlements between enterprises, which will be signing contracts with Iranian companies in line with the memorandum, are to be determined in an agreement between the governments.

Russia: Oil-Sugar Contract With Cuba Suspended

LD0605205496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2044 GMT 6 May 96

[By Vladimir Zadera]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 6 (Itar-Tass) — The "oil-sugar" contract signed in accordance with a Russian-Cuban intergovernmental agreement has been suspended, deputy director of the international department of the Alfa-Eco Russian company Vladimir Bzhedugov told Tass on Monday.

Under the contract, the company was to deliver in Cuba about 1.5 million tons of Russian oil in exchange for 500,000 tons of Cuban sugar. For today, Bzhedugov said, the sides have delivered about half of the contracted volume.

All in all, the intergovernmental agreement provides for the exchange of 10.5 million tons of Russian oil for four million tons of Cuban sugar in 1996-1998.

Last August, Russian companies Alfa-Eco and Menatep-Impex won a tender for the contract.

Bzhedugov blamed the Cuban side for complications with the fulfillment of the contract. He said it violated the terms of sugar deliveries, which resulted in losses for its Russian partners.

Cuba's trade representative in Russia Adalberto Dumenigo, for his part, told a press conference on Monday that the Cuban side is ready to fulfill the contract "to the last letter" and is ready to compensate for the growth in oil prices since the start of the year.

Russia: Zyuganov Meets German Public, Opposes NATO Expansion

LD0705091496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0653 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BONN, May 7 (Itar-Tass) — The development of the situation in Russia, European security problems, and prospects for the development of Russo-German relations were the subjects dealt with in an report delivered before members of the German general public by Gennadiy Zyuganov, Russia's presidential candidate and leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, on Monday night. He stayed here on a private visit on May 5-7 at the invitation of the German-Russian Forum as well as the German Foreign Policy Society.

The Russian presidential candidate, in response to questions, firmly opposed NATO's eastward expansion plans and the "military bloc mentality" which enhances the danger of confrontation in Europe. Besides, he believes, NATO's expansion would frustrate European accords on conventional arms.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe should be an important instrument in promoting the cause of European security, Zyuganov said. His opinion is that NATO's eastward expansion can be avoided if NATO and Russia work out an agreement providing security guarantees for Central and Eastern European countries.

In answer to a question why the Russian presidential candidate was not received by German Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Zyuganov said: "You must refer this question to the Chancellor. At the same time I am satisfied with the fact that I had detailed conversations with the leaders of the parliamentary groups of parties, including the ruling ones."

Russia: Deputy FM Ivanov Interviewed on Arrival in Sarajevo

LD0705071096 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0400 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Igor Ivanov, Russian first deputy foreign minister, continues his working trip to the Balkans. He arrived in Sarajevo yesterday morning.

[Begin recording] [Ivanov] The purpose of this trip to the Balkans is to emphasize yet again Russia's role in the settlement of the situation in Bosnia and the region as a whole.

I have President Yeltsin's instructions to convey his personal messages to the President of Croatia, which

I have done, to Bosnia- Herzegovina President Izetbegovic and Serbian President Milosevic which stress Russia's firm resolve to assist in the implementation of the peace agreements elaborated in Dayton and subsequently signed in Paris.

[Correspondent] During all his meetings with the Bosnian leaders Igor Ivanov stressed that there was no alternative to elections which, in accordance with the peace agreements, should take place by mid-September. Either the elections take place and Bosnia's statehood is restored, or there will ensue the chaos of a new war.

Ivanov's collocutors agreed with him. Issues of bilateral cooperation were also discussed, but it was emphasized that elections should take place first. Today's meetings dealt with the problems of refugees, economic restoration, Moslem complaints about Bosnian Serbs. Igor Ivanov left Sarajevo in the evening for Pale to meet the Serbian side. [end recording]

Russia: Draft Agreement With Ukraine on Missile Complex Handover

MM0705103496 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 7 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed report under the "Monitoring Government Decisions" rubric: "Missile Complexes Change Residence Permit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A draft agreement between the Russian Federation Government and the Ukrainian Government on the handover to Russia for further use of strategic missile complexes' weapons and military equipment being stored in Ukrainian arsenals has been approved. In the first half-year the Ukrainian side will hand over to the Russian military 10 RS-18 missiles with all the equipment needed to launch them. In turn the Russian side will provide funding for work relating to warranty inspection and servicing by the manufacturer at the strategic missile complexes left on Ukrainian territory.

Russia: Moscow Softens Line on Abkhazia; Worries Georgia

MK0605142096 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 May 96 p 3

[Report by Mikhail Globachev: "Sukhumi Continues To Receive Shipments. Moscow Does Not Want To Push Things to the Extreme"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The outcome of the prolonged consultations between Gennadiy Gagulia, prime minister of the unrecognized Republic of Abkhazia, and Russian politicians that took place in Moscow in March and early April, has not received broad coverage. Observers tend to believe that the trip has been on the whole unproductive. However, as your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA commentator managed to find out, in the course of Mr. Gagulia's meetings, primarily with Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Pastukhov, the sides coordinated a list of goods allowed to be shipped to Abkhazia. Under the resolution by the 19 January summit of the CIS heads of state, only humanitarian shipments may be sent to this republic and they are, depending on the way in which they have arrived, either to go through customs in the Georgian port of Poti or to be inspected by Georgian representatives on the land border with Russia.

According to a source close to the Abkhaz leadership the list of goods allowed for importation was defined by the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry and the Federal Border Service based on a verbal agreement. It contains 41 items, in particular foodstuffs and drinking alcohol, medicines and medical equipment, building materials, mineral fertilizer, fuel and lubricants, household goods, paper, and spare parts for motor vehicles. Furthermore, 27 agricultural products are allowed to be exported from Abkhazia, the only possible source of revenue. The export of citrus plants, which prior to the war reached 35,000 tonnes, has drastically fallen in the past few years owing to the economic blockade; following a tightening of border regime the greater part of the 1994 tangerine yield had to be destroyed.

The consultations also led to the establishment of border control procedures for vessels going to Abkhazia. Inspection will be carried out on the external roads of the Sukhumi port and in the port itself by representatives of the Russian side, without the vessels having to call in at Poti. The main concern will apparently be that the cargo should conform to the aforementioned list. This decision apparently testifies to the unwillingness of the Russian leadership to reduce Abkhazia's residents to extremity; as is known, some time in mid-March an attempt to impound a Ukrainian and a Turkish merchant vessel, which failed to "check in" at Poti, nearly led to a shoot-out between Russian border guards and Abkhaz coast guards. It is also quite likely that after repeated appeals by the Abkhaz public, Moscow officialdom has taken cognizance of the fact that the blockade is especially hurting the Russian-speaking population of Abkhazia, which for the most part has no possibility to engage in subsistence farming. It is not ruled out that this is also a reaction to Tbilisi's aspiration to have the peacekeepers pulled out of the area.

As concerns border control, together with the Georgian side, along the Psou River, now seven Georgian border guards have been sent there. All of them, however, are ethnic Armenians, which certainly lowers the probability of incidents.

The recent protest by Georgia's Communications Minister Fridon Injia to the Russian side over its failure to implement one of the measures stipulated by the January CIS heads of state summit, points to a certain softening of Russia's line with respect to the separatist republic. Under that provision, Abkhazia's international telephone communication lines should proceed only via Tbilisi. The switching was to have been completed before 7 April. Mr. Injia noted in this context that, in addition to the existing six communication channels for the Russian border guards and peacekeepers, two more have been opened on orders by Russian Deputy Communications Minister Naum Marder.

In the Abkhazia-Georgia-Russia "political triangle," Russia's foreign department has sought to control not only such fundamental matters as peace negotiations, but also some particular questions, including control of humanitarian supplies. This manifested itself especially graphically beginning in the fall of 1993, when hostilities between Georgia and Abkhazia ceased while the dissolution of the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation temporarily shifted the balance of forces in the Russian leadership. Then-Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, whose political biography was closely connected with Eduard Shevardnadze, openly pursued a course that Sukhumi representatives defined as "extremely pro-Georgian." They said the same about Boris Pastukhov, who is personally in charge of the "Abkhaz question." Neither did Yevgeniy Primakov's appointment arouse any enthusiasm in Abkhazia because the new minister is also known for his association with Georgia. In the recent period, however, the prediction by Abkhazia's President Vladislav Ardzinba, who knows Mr. Primakov well from their work at the Institute of Oriental Studies and in the USSR Supreme Soviet, that the new foreign minister intends to follow a balanced policy within the "triangle" seems to be borne out.

To all appearances the Federal Border Service of the Russian Federation is aware of its responsibility for the situation of the Russian border guards doing their service on Abkhazia's territory. And this balance of interests, regularly drawing the most harsh criticism from the Georgian side, has every chance of staying intact until the outcome of presidential elections in Russia becomes known.

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin, Zyuganov Commitment to Constitution Contrasted

LD0705120896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1118 GMT 7 May 96

[Commentary by Tamara Zamyatina: "Yeltsin Is Committed to Constitution and Stability"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 7 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin has made one of the worthiest steps in his election campaign by firmly stating, in response to public remarks made by his security chief Aleksandr Korzhakov about its being advisable to put off the election date, that presidential elections will be held as scheduled.

It must be recalled that only two years ago when Vladimir Shumeyko came forward with a similar proposal — that the powers of the Parliament and President be extended — Yeltsin maintained a long pause while the then Presidential Press Secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov was busy telling the impatient journalists that "the President is studying society's reaction".

This time Yeltsin did not propose to study the reaction, thereby showing that the leader of the country is consistently committed to the Constitution.

Yeltsin's supporters regard the hope for stability, which is directly connected with the observance of legality in everything, as the principal merit of the candidate for the second presidential term.

Therefore, Yeltsin, through his rebuke to his security chief, lent confidence not only to the like-minded people but also to the wavering constituents that the present authorities, in the event of an electoral win, will act according to civilised rules.

Quite a different attitude to the Fundamental Law was shown these days by Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. In response to the bankers' plea to the presidential candidates to find a compromise in the run-up to the elections, Zyuganov stated that "restricting the presidential powers and vesting the State Duma with the right to form a government" would suit him quite well as a compromise.

But it was the people, who in 1993 voted for the current powers of the President and his right together with Premier to form a Cabinet of Ministers, thereby supporting the draft current Constitution.

So, Zyuganov, by encroaching upon Constitutional norms and suggesting that they be altered through backstage accords, places himself above law. This means that the danger of possible unconstitutional actions in the event of his advent to power, just as in the event of his electoral setback, comes precisely from the leader of the Communists.

Thus, Boris Yeltsin, unlike the Communist party leader, rose to the occasion in the indirect polemics with Zyuganov over commitment to the Constitution, and did not seek to tip the balance in his favour — Korzhakov helped to do that.

The caption under one photograph in the just-published photographic album of Boris Yeltsin appears to be significant within this context. The caption quotes the President as saying while putting his two fingers up that "some are in a hurry to help so as to impede advance towards the goal".

Russia: Yeltsin Leaves on Tour, Visits Village Near Moscow

LD0705085596 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 0800 GMT 7 May 96

[Report from the "Novosti" newscast by Anna Prokhorova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin has left on another tour of the country, one of 16 planned for May. Today, the Russian president is to visit the village of Naro-Fominsk near Moscow. Clearly, the main subject of Boris Yeltsin's conversations with inhabitants of the district will be social topics and, in particular, payment of pension arrears.

Russia: Justice Minister Hails Yeltsin Edict To Develop Law Bodies

LD0605221096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1412 GMT 6 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Olga Solodova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 6 May (Itar-Tass) — Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev noted today at a news conference in the Russian president's administration that in a law-governed state greater priority is given to civil law proceedings than to criminal law ones. He stressed that the edict just signed by the head of state "On measures to develop law bodies," according to which the Ministry of Justice is assigned the task of carrying out a legal experts' examination of drafts of federal laws and normative legal acts and of checking their conformity to the Constitution and federal laws, should considerably influence the reform of law bodies.

Now the Justice Ministry has the right to demand information from executive power bodies in connection with the founding activities of public associations. And the justice minister himself can make representations to the president and the government on bringing to book officials who do not comply with the laws. In the near future the minister must present to the government concepts on the reform of law bodies, and the government must decide on changes to the Russian Code of Criminal Procedure in connection with the edict, as well as on problems of finance and resources.

Valentin Kovalev said that the question of reforming Russian law bodies has long been examined by experts and the main trends of the necessary reforms are already clear. First of all, it is the strengthening of the system for carrying out court decisions through creating the institution of bailiffs and implementing legal proceedings. It is also necessary to coordinate educational work to increase people's awareness of the law. Law bodies today have right to register legal persons and real estate deals. The minister believes that to check the legality of these actions law bodies should be given the powers of agencies of inquiry in such cases.

Russia: Yeltsin Supports Investment Projects in Yaroslavl Region

LD0605193396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1738 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YAROSLAVL, May 6 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin intends to sign two decrees to support large investment projects in the Yaroslavl region, regional Governor Anatoliy Lisitsyn said at a news conference in Yaroslavl.

One of the decrees aims at providing support to four local diesel companies: The Yaroslavl motor plant, two plants producing fuel and diesel equipment, and the Tutayev motor plant, he said.

These companies are currently holding talks on joint production projects with several foreign firms, including Germany's Bosch, Britain's Perkins and Serbia's Sanos, Lisitsyn said. However, these projects to manufacture competitive products can be implemented only with the help of state financial aid, he said.

State support for the diesel companies should total some 500 billion rubles, said Lisitsyn. He said he proposed to Yeltsin, who visited Yaroslavl on May 3, that the companies be allowed to delay the repayment of their multi-billion ruble debt to the federal budget.

Yeltsin also praised the draft decree including the investment project to build cottages in Yaroslavl with the participation of France's Phoenix firm in the Your Own Home federal program, he said.

The French government has already extended a $25 million loan to Yaroslavl for this project. The region expects to receive some $18 million worth of technological equipment in order to modernize local construction companies in 1996-1997. The draft of a corresponding presidential decree provides for the exemption of this equipment from customs duties, Lisitsyn said.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Decree on State Service Council

LD0705102296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0743 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 7 (Itar-Tass) — President Yeltsin has signed a decree on the Council for State Service under the President of the Russian Federation. It will be made up of representatives of the Russian President, the Federation Council, the State Duma, the government, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and the High Court of Arbitration. Chief of Staff of the Russian President Nikolay Yegorov and First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets were appointed cochairmen of the Council.

The President approved by his decree a new composition of the Commission for the Affairs of Women, Family and Demography under the President of the Russian Federation. Deputy to the State Duma Yekaterina Lakhova became its chairperson.

The texts of the two decrees were received by Itar-Tass today.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Decree on Communications Technologies Program

LD0605223096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1705 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 6 May (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has signed a decree "On a Special Comprehensive Program for Creating Communications, Television, and Radio Broadcasting Technologies." ITAR-TASS learned this today from the presidential press service.

The decree notes that "with the aim of priority development of communications, television, and radio broadcasting systems on the basis of a predominant use of Russian equipment, and considering these systems' special role in carrying out the economic reforms, preserving the scientific and technological potential, creating competitive high technology in the defense complex industries, and ensuring the country's economic and information security," the president of the Russian Federation [RF] has decreed the assigning of the status of a presidential program to the Special Comprehensive Federal

Program for Creating Communications, Television, and Radio Broadcasting Technologies. The RF government has been ordered to ensure that funds are allocated for the implementation of this special comprehensive federal program in the draft budget for 1997 and subsequent years.

Russia: Court Upholds Yeltsin's Right To Appoint Governors

MK0605141796 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 May 96 p 2

[Report by Konstantin Katanyan under the "Constitutional Court" rubric: "President Wins Suit. His Right To Appoint Kray and Oblast Governors Has Been Upheld"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma has covered with its own caring hand the pit it dug for the Russian president.

By lodging an appeal with the Constitutional Court disputing Boris Yeltsin's edict of 3 October 1994 "On Measures To Strengthen a Single System of Executive Authority in the Russian Federation," which stipulated that the heads of administration of the Russian Federation components are to be appointed or dismissed from office by edicts of the Russian president, the Duma members clearly expected it to be deemed unconstitutional, which would have inevitably brought Yeltsin's rating down on the eve of the presidential election. Yet the proceedings ended in a crushing defeat for the parliamentarians, who failed to foresee the consequences of their passing of the law on the procedure for forming the Federation Council last December.

This hastily enacted law reaffirmed the legitimacy of the heads of the executive authority of Federation components who had earlier been appointed by the president. It also stipulated that the gubernatorial elections in all regions must be held not later than December 1996. Therefore, the appointed chiefs of krays and oblasts may stay in office until then on fully legitimate grounds.

Had Yeltsin's edict been deemed to be unconstitutional, all the governors appointed by him would have had to be automatically dismissed from office. Yet there would be no one to replace them, because many of the Federation components are not ready to hold elections yet. Their legislatures, which thought they still had plenty of time to go before December, simply have not yet drawn up and passed the requisite regulations defining democratic procedures for local elections. For this reason the Constitutional Court could not let a good half of Russia plunge into a dangerous situation of powerlessness. While reaffirming that under the Russian Constitution the heads of the executive organs of state authority in the regions are to be popularly elected on the basis of the law, the Constitutional Court pointed out in its ruling that "by the time the disputed edict of the Russian president was issued no legislative framework on this matter was created." For this reason, the president, being the guarantor of the Constitution, was obliged to ensure the coordinated functioning of the organs of state authority and, upon closing the legal gap by his edict, to appoint heads of the executive authorities in the regions where local charters and electoral laws had not yet been passed.

Another provision of the disputed edict, under which the president is entitled to call elections for regional administrations at his own discretion, could well have been deemed to be inconsistent with the Constitution, since a ban on holding elections, even within the appropriate legislative framework, would put some Federation components in an unequal position compared to the other Russian Federation components where gubernatorial elections were held in similar circumstances. However, citing that same much-invoked law on forming the Federation Council, which introduced "a different procedure for calling elections," the Constitutional Court deemed this provision of the presidential edict to have become invalid. Given that, legal proceedings concerning the examination of this provision were simply terminated.

Professor Oleg Mironov, representative of the State Duma, who mockingly called his opposite number — Mikhail Mityukov, plenipotentiary representative of the Russian president at the Constitutional Court — "a losing party" minutes before the verdict was read out, was, naturally, very displeased with this outcome. In the end it was precisely the State Duma that turned out to be a loser, and the deputies have only themselves to blame for that. Had they not rushed to pass a law on the forming the Federation Council as an alternative to the presidential draft, the outcome of the trial could well have been different. But their desire to spite Yeltsin as much as possible did the Duma more harm than good. In an attempt to kill two birds with one stone, the deputies bungled it all. Not only will the governors appointed by the president now remain in office until elections, but they might well be reelected. Since the Constitutional Court has recognized their legitimacy, no one can call them usurpers of power, so their rivals who were planning to build their election campaigns on this premise, have now been clearly left without trump cards.

Media Issues

Russia: 'Text' of Yeltsin Address to Regional Media Workers

LD0605173696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1559 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] Russian President Boris Yeltsin met with regional media workers. What follows is the full text of his address.

Freedom of the press is a fact of Russian life. One should recall the wisdom, If you want to hear the truth, let everybody speak freely. Our media represent various viewpoints. Journalists are not afraid of criticizing the authorities. This signifies that we are moving in the right direction.

Quite a few people in Russia are now aware that they should reckon with the fourth estate, as journalists are often referred to. Being an estate in its own right implies, above all, responsibility. The journalists know their potential and have learned how to handle it. Responsibility is in a shorter supply even though the press cannot be free without responsibility.

You have on numerous occasions made a decisive impact on the moods of the people and the atmosphere in Russian society. You can, if you so desire, make a strong contribution to rebirth of Russia, facilitate the change and help people find their identity and realize their potential in a new environment. But the word can kill hope in people, too.

We work together for consolidation of a free press in an open society and law abiding state. The experience of the recent years shows that this is no easy task. Attempts are still being made, especially in remote areas, to put mass media at the service of leaders and branches of authorities whose interests may be very broadly understood.

I know of bans on publication of document issued by federal officials in regional media, of confiscating the issues of mass circulation papers and bans on TV and radio broadcasts which criticized regional officials.

The journalists are also helpless against criminal commercial organizations. I am aware of this and I regard protection of and help to the national and regional press as one of my priorities.

The right to access information should be not only declared but also implemented. You will have remembered that several pieces of legislation and ordinances to this effect have been passed. I do not, however, believe this is sufficient. I am sure that an Information Access Act is needed.

There is another problem. To be honest, other preoccupations have kept us from getting down to it. I have in mind the access to primary political information originating in the capital.

Numerous state authorities have set up press centers in recent years. Supplying information to journalists in Russian regions is their overriding goal but in real life some of these units have transformed into censorship bodies and act as barriers between their bosses and journalists.

Enabling the flow of true information reach the broadest audience possible is a very important task. People in remote areas of Russia read chiefly the local press while the potential for the journalists working in it to communicate with central authorities is very limited.

It would not do for the regional press to be second-rate. It must not rely on the reports already processed by journalists in the capital.

We are now working on this problem. A team has been set up in the presidential headquarters which will enable you to have a more complete and speedy information. We have now to think together how to make this work useful, above all for you.

I am convinced that while opinions and comments may vary, facts are sacred. Unfortunately, far from everybody is faithful to this rule of journalism.

New young names emerged in our press whose writing is exciting and views are new. But some young journalists are at odds with the legal culture, with ethics.

I am sad to say so but distortion of facts, or, to name a spade a spade, lies are not regarded as something indecent in certain publications and programs.

I have come to this conclusion from what newspapers write about me. I read several local papers once and felt ashamed for the brazen lies they sell to the readership. Slandering the president has become the normal style of these publication. I for one try to ignore these lies but they treat other people in this way, too.

It is hard to teach moral principles to grown ups. But your journalistic corporation could set high ethical standards while the state will help you in acquiring legal knowledge, a major indicator of the journalistic skill.

I believe that you do need persuasion that freedom of the press which has become a reality in Russia must be maintained. This is our civil, moral and professional duty.

Much has to be done in the economic, personal safety and social spheres. It is you, the journalists, who show to the authorities what us wrong and why. Do not think that the authorities are deaf to serious reports in newspapers, radio or TV. On certain occasions draft decrees or ordinances were revised or withdrawn because the public opinion took a negative view of them.

The farther we go on the road of democracy, the more influential the journalistic word will be for the authorities.

Media reports on a statesman or official embezzling state finances or abusing his power in any other way will spell the end of his career. We will come to this fairly soon, I believe.

I know how difficult your job is, how many problems you face. All of us living in Russia are like swimmers across a river who left the midstream behind. We are tired and the bank we left is behind. Some shout: "Let's move back."

Some of you might support this call. I will tell you bluntly, if we turn back, we will drown. Russia's problems must be resolved and the practices of the past is no guidance for us.

This is why we should press forward. I am convinced that we should do it together.

I do not call on you to promote candidate Yeltsin's campaign. You are professionals above all. For this reason I expect a different thing from you, a responsible attitude towards what is going on in Russia.

Military & Space Issues

Russia: Preview of 9 May Moscow Military Parade

MM0605143796 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 May 96 p 1

[Article by Aleksandr Oliynik and Oleg Vladykin: "A Military Parade Is the Symbol of Our Gratitude to the Generation of Victors. On Victory Day Moscow Garrison Troops Will Ceremonially March Across Red Square for the 122d Time"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Needless to say, it is healthy that the 9 May military parade in Moscow once again has the status of an official state celebration, in accordance with the 19 May 1995 federal law "On Immortalizing the Soviet People's Victory in the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War" and the 4 December 1995 Russian Federation Government decree "On the Procedure for Celebrating Days of Military Glory (Russian Victory Days) in the Russian Federation Armed Forces and Other Troops." Generally speaking, the long disputes over whether "military spectaculars" are necessary in theory on holidays in downtown Moscow have been settled by legislation.

Nonetheless it is probably not the actual appearance of directive documents whose requirements must be observed and implemented by all citizens and organs of power that is of more importance. After the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Great Victory it seems that every Russian citizen has become particularly keenly conscious of what a valuable tradition a military parade on Victory Day is for our people, of how essential this tradition is to help us preserve the memory of our forebears' feats of arms, courage, and fortitude, and to make us aware of the need to prove ourselves worthy of the glory won by our fathers and grandfathers. After all, when we see the well-drilled columns of today's soldiers we quite naturally feel proud for our country, which is able to have an Army that will always be capable of defending its borders, its integrity, and its independence.

Every military parade, no matter how similar it is to the previous ones in terms of the way in which it is organized, is nonetheless unique and reflects the signs of the times, the changes taking place in the Army and in society. In what way will this parade be notable?

"The 122d parade of Moscow Garrison troops is primarily unique in that it will once again be held on the capital's Red Square after a five-year break," Lieutenant Colonel Leontiy Kuznetsov, commander of the Moscow Military District, who was appointed by the Russian Federation defense minister to command the parade, said during a conversation.

There are also a number of other differences. First and foremost the number of parade participants has been reduced — 7,370 people will be taking part. In front of each composite regiment (16 in all) the standard bearers will carry the colors of the renowned units and large formations who set examples of heroism on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War, including the Victory Banner. Admittedly, combat equipment will not be on parade this time. That is due to the current refurbishment of Manege Square where combat vehicles were usually deployed, and also to the fact that it costs too much money, which the Defense Ministry does not currently have, to deliver the vehicles and drill the mechanized column.

Thus, 65 infantry parade companies will cross Red Square 9 May. Drummers from the Moscow Military Music School will traditionally go first. Then four companies from military educational establishments. We will list everyone so that anyone who wants to do so can keep an informed eye on the parade during the holiday.

First will come the M.V. Frunze Military Academy. Then the F.E. Dzerzhinskiy Military Academy; the Marshal of the Soviet Union R.Ya. Malinovskiy Armored

Troops Military Academy; the V.V. Kuybyshev Military Engineering Academy; the Marshal of the Soviet Union S.K. Timoshenko Chemical Protection Military Academy; the Yu.A. Gagarin Air Force Academy; the Professor N.Ye. Zhukovskiy Air Force Engineering Academy; the Military University; the Higher Naval Engineering School; and the Border Guard Troops Military Institute.

Then will come four companies apiece from a paratroop regiment, a naval infantry regiment, and a Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs Internal Troops regiment. They will be followed by students from Moscow's Suvorov Military School and St. Petersburg's Nakhimov Naval School. And the Moscow Higher Combined Arms Command School.

The parade will be wound up by a composite military band. The brilliance of the parade, the precision of the parade columns, and the solemnity and emotion with which the event is perceived depend in many respects on the musical accompaniment.

"This is perhaps the first time that the musical accompaniment for the parade will have been enhanced by choral singing and dancing," Major Aleksandr Gerasimov, military conductor of the Moscow Military District staff band, said. "The A.V. Aleksandrov, Moscow Military District, and Air Defense song and dance groups, who are taking part in the parade, along with the composite 700-man regimental band, will display their creative skills. On the initiative of Major General Viktor Afanasyev, chief military conductor and chief of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry Military Band Service, the so-called finale of this parade will comprise a musical composition including the best examples of Russian classical and Soviet music. Among them Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, Arutyunyan's "Victory" marching song, Pakhmutova's "Let Us Honor Those Great Years," the well-known "Yablochko," and other works.

All the participants in the Red Square parade began ceremonial drills back in mid-March in their permanent bases, preparing to put on a brilliant show for the thousands of visitors to the celebrations and millions of television viewers. They assembled on Khodynskoye Pole in Moscow 16 April to drill together.

One should probably remember the tremendous work that has to be done during the preparations for and the military parade itself. A Russian Federation defense minister's order identified a number of officials both in the Defense Ministry's central apparatus and among the troops whose job is to carry out this work. What has been done to make qualitative preparations for this parade?

First, in early March an organizational group was set up comprising Russian Federation deputy defense ministers, commanders in chief of branches of the Armed Forces, the commander of the Moscow Military District, and the chiefs of Russian Federation Defense Ministry main and central directorates. A working group, comprising the first deputy commander in chief of the Ground Forces, the first deputy commander of the Moscow Military District, officers from the main staffs of branches of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, the staffs of categories of troops, Moscow Military District, Russian Federation Armed Forces Rear Services, and Russian Federation Defense Ministry main and central directorates, has been given direct responsibility for the preparations. They are wholly responsible for accommodations, food, uniforms, transportation, and other backup for participants in the parade.

Incidentally, it must be pointed out that the parade preparations are being fully funded without a hitch from the funds allocated. This has enabled all the planned events to be carried out strictly as scheduled. For instance, the making of the uniforms for parade participants. Scarcely had they arrived at the parade ground than their measurements were taken and orders placed with military workshops in Moscow and a number of neighboring cities thanks to prompt payment. Thus every participant in the 9 May Red Square parade will be impeccably dressed.

We will once again get a chance to admire our troops' dashing bearing and an excuse to take delight in our Russian Army at least on this holiday. And when parade commander Col. Gen. Leontiy Kuznetsov leads the convoy of marching companies, who will not feel a legitimate sense of delight!

Russia: Yeltsin Inspects Kremlin Regiment on 60th Anniversary

LD0605171996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1247 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 6 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin made an inspection of the Kremlin regiment Monday on the occasion of the regiment's 60th anniversary.

The president congratulated the regiment's personnel on the upcoming Victory Day. He said over 200 servicemen of the Kremlin regiment were killed or severely wounded in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945.

Yeltsin stressed the importance of the regiment, which "loyally protects the heart of Russia — the Kremlin, and the official residence of the president." He thanked the regiment personnel for good service.

The Kremlin regiment marched in front of the president.

Russia: Grachev Sends Message on 4th Anniversary of Armed Forces

LD0605210896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1013 GMT 6 May 96

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 6 May (Itar-Tass) — On Tuesday 7 May, servicemen of the army and navy will celebrate the fourth anniversary of the formation of the Russian Armed Forces. In an order sent to ITAR-TASS today by the press service of the Defence Ministry, Army General Pavel Grachev, defense minister of the Russian Federation, congratulated the personnel, army and navy veterans, civilian personnel, and workers and officials of defense enterprises on the occasion.

The order says, in particular: "The new Russian Army is celebrating its birthday on the eve of the 51st anniversary of the great victory. The history arranged that these two significant events will always stand side by side to remind us of the most important lesson of history: To repel aggression and ensure reliable security of the country, we need strong armed forces, capable of protecting the Fatherland."

The document points out that "despite all the hardships, the Russian Army has been and is a reliable guarantor of security, integrity and stability of our motherland and is capable of ensuring the protection of its interests. Servicemen of the army and navy fully understand and support the course of the reforms and democratic transformations as the main condition for Russia's might and prosperity."

The minister thinks that "servicemen of the Russian Armed Forces manifest their loyalty to military duty and to the best traditions of service to the fatherland in their daily military training, in selflessly and courageously carrying out tasks in peace-keeping forces, and in demonstrating staunchness and heroism in fighting armed extremism and protecting our state's territorial integrity."

The order of the defense minister of the Russian Federation expresses confidence that the "servicemen of the army and navy will be steadily increasing their battle readiness, strengthening military discipline and orderliness, valuing honor and comradeship, and continuing the glorious battle traditions of the heroes of the Great Patriotic War."

The Armed Forces of Russia were formed on 7 May 1992 by presidential decree of the Russian Federation in accordance with the declaration "On security" of sovereignty of the Russian Federation. It was confirmed then that the Russian Army would follow the best battle and heroic traditions, and display readiness to use the armed forces to protect freedom and independence of Russia and to ensure its security and sovereignty. The decree consolidated the principles of the formation of the Russian Armed Forces: Military structures should be subordinated to the supreme bodies of state power; the organizational structure, fighting strength, and troop number (force) should correspond to Russia's security concept; the multinational regular army should be built by combining military conscription service with contract service; sole command; constant battle readiness; and consideration of national and historical traditions, the norms of international law, and world experience in military construction.

Russia: Zyuganov's Victory Day Message Published

MM0705103896 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 7 May 96 p 1

[Message from Gennadiy Zyuganov under the general heading: "Congratulations on Your Holiday, Victors!": "Comrades! Compatriots!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] So here we are in a new spring, the 51st since that memorable day when, through the military prowess of the soldier and the toiler in the rear and the unprecedented courage and heroism of all Soviet people, a line was drawn under World War II, the cruelest and bloodiest war in the history of mankind.

We had to pay in tens of millions of lives for the political games of the Munich peacemakers, who reared Hitler's Germany for a crusade to the East and for the sake of destroying the Land of the Soviets.

But it was the Soviet Union, mighty and free and welded together by the friendship of all peoples, that delivered the world from fascist slavery and restored independence to dozens of states.

For 40 years following the war our country was the guarantor of peace and tranquillity on the planet, the hope and mainstay of freedom-loving mankind.

Today this great power is no more, and there is no longer peace in Europe either. States are disintegrating. An undeclared war is being waged. Civilians are dying.

Today the bloodshed and tears of old people, women, and children have become a daily phenomenon of our lives. The very existence of the independent Russian state has been put in doubt.

A country with extremely rich resources and talented and industrious people finds itself as a result of the "reforms" on the brink of bankruptcy, forced to live on credit and on handouts from overseas patrons.

A country that restored its war-shattered economy in just a few years, that was the first to break into space, and that developed the peaceful atom has been thrown back decades in the course of just five years.

A country that amazed the world with its social achievements, with its developed medicine and education, finds itself on the brink of poverty and extinction.

It is possible to destroy a great power and to rob the people, but to eradicate from our hearts the memory of Great Victory is impossible. This memory is sacred! It nourishes in us will power and courage, it warms our hearts, and it calls us to unite in the name of our children and our grandchildren, in the name of the Motherland.

Veterans, your sons bow to you in all humbleness!

The memory of our heroes is eternal!

Glory to the victorious people!

We believe in Russia and its future. We believe that it will revive!

We know what we must do to restore to our Fatherland a worthy place in the world.

We are confident of your support. Behind us stand Russia, the Motherland, and the people!

Russia: Air Defense Command Post Carries Out 'Practice Drill'

MM0705115796 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 5 May 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Ivanov: "We Will Guard the Skies Together With Kazakhstan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation Air Defense Forces Central Command Post led by Colonel General of Aviation Viktor Prudnikov, chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Questions of the Air Defense of the Commonwealth Countries, has carried out a practice drill involving the forces and systems allocated for the Combined Air Defense System. Questions of improving the command and control of the forces and systems, which form the basis of the Combined Air Defense System, were rehearsed.

The aspects of Russian and Kazakhstani Air Defense forces and systems' taking up joint combat alert duty over the next few days were examined in the same kind of detail. Let us recall that a month earlier the Russian and Belarusian Armies began performing this task.

Russia: Progress M-31 Spacecraft Docks With Mir Orbiter

LD0705092896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0903 GMT 7 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 May (ITAR-TASS) — The Progress M-31 automatic cargo craft docked with the manned Mir complex at 1254 hours Moscow Time today.

The Space cargo craft docked with the station on the side of its transfer compartment. Fuel for the joint propulsion unit, equipment, scientific equipment, food and drinking water have been delivered.

According to telemetry and reports from Yuriy Onufrichenko, Yuriy Usachev and Shannon Lucid, the on-board systems of the Mir station are functioning normally.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Chechen Leader Zavgayev Supports Yeltsin Visit

LD0605163896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1247 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 6 (Interfax) — Chechen leader Doku Zavgayev told Interfax Monday he approves the intention by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to visit Chechnya. He "is absolutely sure that the visit will only help normalize the situation in the republic."

He described as "non-serious" the recent statement by the leader of Chechen separatists Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev that he "cannot guarantee Yeltsin's security if he comes to Chechnya." "Who is Yandarbiyev? An irresponsible criminal, one of those who unleashed the war in Chechnya and drove the Chechen people to a national tragedy," said Zavgayev.

He said that he agrees with Yeltsin that it is necessary to carry out talks with field commanders. "But I am against conducting them with criminals," said Zavgayev.

According to him, the current Chechen leadership "has conducted and continues to conduct talks with Dudayev militants," he said in reference to former Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev. "This is our daily routine work," said Zavgayev. "Speaking with some of them I became convinced that there are many deceived people among them, as well as those who have been coerced."

Commenting on the situation around the administrative center of Shali, Zavgayev said that "passport control and surrender of arms have been taking place there since Monday morning."

"The republic's authorities together with the regional administration are continuously undertaking explanatory work among local people. I also met them today. I think that by joint efforts we managed to neutralize the situation around Shali and prevent armed confrontation," said Zavgayev.

Russia: Maskhadov, Imayev Remark on Possibility of Chechen Talks

LD0605162396 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1400 GMT 6 May 96

[Video report from Chechnya by special correspondent Grigoriy Brynza, including recordings of interviews with Usman Imayev and an unidentified Chechen armed group leader — from the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Brynza] Six Russian servicemen were gravely wounded yesterday when a convoy of federal forces came under fire near Gudermes. Also yesterday, in broad daylight, in Groznyy persons unknown opened fire on a group of servicemen buying food in the market. An officer was killed on the spot and another serviceman was taken to hospital in serious condition.

It seems that the armed formations' guerrilla tactics are assuming an ubiquitous nature.

Aslan Maskhadov said today that he admits the possibility of the start of talks. However, in Maskhadov's opinion, such talks should discuss only military, not political questions.

Usman Imayev, former prosecutor in Dudayev's government also considers that talks are possible in the near future.

[Imayev] I have never ruled out the possibility of peace talks and do not rule it out now. But there should be the very minimum prerequisites so that the commanders have reason to believe the Russian side's claim that they are really peace talks.

[Brynza] I remind you that Usman Imayev led the delegation of the combatant side at the talks last year. Then, for displaying loyalty toward the federal side, he was removed by Dudayev from that office. The majority of field commanders whom we met in Urus-Martanovskiy District do not intend to display such loyalty or seek compromises. This man leads the armed group which holds the defenses of the village of Goyskoye.

[addressing unidentified man with ornate cap] Are you not tired of fighting?

[Man] You know if it is necessary, as our president said to us, we will fight for 48 years.

[Brynza] The desire of Maskhadov and Imayev to resume talks meets with unconcealed resistance from the other field commanders — just as authoritative and more numerous — in the opposition camp.

[addressing Imayev] But do you think that peace will shortly come to this long-suffering land?

[Imayev] Yes, yes, peace will come to this land and it will be the long-awaited peace which suits both sides — the Russian and Chechen sides.

[Brynza] From Urus-Martan, Grigoriy Brynza, Rudolf Ushanov, ORT. [Video shows convoy, street scenes, Maskhadov at press conference, open-air meeting with fighters and civilians present, Imayev interviewed, man reading paper in Cyrillic entitled ICHKERIA, man in black and gold cap and fatigues.]

Russia: Consultations With Chechen Field Commanders Continue

LD0705120596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0952 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 7 (Interfax) — Chechen leaders are continuing consultations with the opposition field commanders, Chechen Deputy Prime Minister Abdulla Bugayev told Interfax on Tuesday.

He said he had held several meetings with representatives of the Chechen rebel commander Aslan Maskhadov.

All of these meetings help to find common approaches, he said.

He did not rule out talks with field commander Shamil Basayev. "It's easier to deal with him than with Dudayev's successor Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev," said Bugayev.

Russia: Satellite Communication Company Assists in Dudayev Investigation

LD0605164196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1247 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SOUTHERN CHECHNYA, May 6 (Interfax) — The death of Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev would not have been possible if the satellite communication company "Inmorsat" had not offered technical information to Russian security services on Dudayev's telephone. Chechen rebel spokesmen said in Chechnya.

Dudayev supporters told Interfax that a special commission created to investigate his death reached this conclusion.

Dudayev was killed in the late hours of April 20 by an air strike while speaking by phone in the vicinity of the village of Gekhi-Chu (the Urus-Martan District, Western Chechnya).

Russia: Chechen Official Hails Peaceful Outcome of Shali Operation

LD0605180096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1554 GMT 6 May 96

[By Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 6 (Itar-Tass) — "A successful completion of the operation on inspecting identification documents as well as surrender of arms in Shali do not mean that the work on the normalization of the situation in the republic has come to an end," Chechnya's First Deputy Prime Minister Abdulla Bugayev told Itar-Tass on Monday.

"The work on achieving a stable peace will be proceeded," he added.

Success of the Shali operation proves that a peaceful outcome of crisis situations is possible, according to Bugayev. He believes that any peaceful settlement should be based on a dialogue with the public and authoritative people.

Bugayev did not rule out that Chechen separatists may undertake attempts to aggravate the situation around Shali, adding however that "Shali residents, as the practice showed, have enough common sense."

Touching upon the situation in the Vedeno region after the signing of an agreement on peace and accord with five large settlements, Bugayev said that the Chechen government is examining the possibility of rendering help to residents of the region, first of all with foodstuffs.

The problem of energy supply to the region has been temporarily solved. Next, Bugayev said, the activity of legal authorities should be resumed to do away with anarchy.

Russia: Extra Security Measures Taken in Chechnya Ahead of Holidays

LD0705115996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0952 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 7 (Interfax) — Federal troops in Chechnya have taken additional security measures to prevent militants from entering the capital Groznyy from the north, a source in the Russian military command told Interfax on Tuesday.

Thanks to these steps the activity of armed gangs in Oktyabrskiy district and the city as a whole has gone down, he said.

The greatest concentration of militants is registered in Chernorechye on the outskirts of the capital. Small groups of gunmen operate in the Zavodskoy and Leninskiy districts of the capital.

Separatists are planning several acts of sabotage during the holidays on May 9-11, the Russian military command said. "Militants intend to carry out actions at several industrial facilities in Zavodskoy district, the center of Groznyy and the airport," the source told Interfax.

Federal formations in Groznyy came under attack five times on Monday [6 May] night, the commandant's office reported. Nobody was killed or wounded. The office said no acts of sabotage or terrorism were registered on Monday.

Checkups continue in Groznyy to find gunmen hiding there. "Local operations are conducted when armed gangs are discovered in the city," an official said.

He added that operations to stamp out militants in Groznyy are conducted mainly by a rapid reaction force and OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] special police force.

Economic Issues

Russia: Directive on Deferring Payments to Federal Budget

MM0705091296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 May 96 p 6

[Russian Federation Government Directive No. 666, signed by Premier Chernomyrdin and dated 23 April 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] With a view to implementing the revenue side of the federal budget in accordance with the federal law "On the Federal Budget for 1996" and reducing payment arrears to the federal budget:

1. The Russian Finance Ministry shall grant under the established procedure deferments on payments to the federal budget on the basis of applications from taxpayers taken in conjunction with their financial position and real ability to repay their debts in the event of:

significant material losses due to natural disasters, man-made disasters, or other causes not dependent on the organization's economic activity;

funding delays from the federal budget.

2. The Russian Finance Ministry, the Russian State Tax Service, and the Russian State Customs Committee shall analyze the implementation of Russian Federation Government Decree No. 641 "On Priority Measures To Strengthen the Revenue Side of the Federal Budget and Improve the Activity of Tax Organs" of 29 June 1995 and the reasons for the emergence of arrears on payments to the federal budget, with proposals aimed at reducing them, and report to the Russian Federation Government along with information on the results for the first quarter of 1996.

3. The Russian Finance Ministry, the Russian State Tax Service, and other federal executive organs shall analyze within two weeks the expediency of granting the current deferments on payments to the federal budget with a view to ensuring early repayment of the sums deferred by certain organizations.

[Signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

Moscow, 23 April 1996
No. 666

Russia: Oil Price Hikes Foreseen After Duty Changes

MM0705094296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 May 96 p 11

[Article by Aleksey Alekseyev: "Exporters Finally Receive Rates From IMF"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the terms for the granting of the IMF loan to Russia, the rate of oil export duty has been cut to 10 ecu per tonne as of 1 April, and will be abolished altogether as of 1 July. According to a number of Russian oil companies, this measure will promote the growth of Russian oil exports to the far abroad and reduce the amount of Russian oil sold within the country. These sales are already down as a result of the decline in effective demand from Russian oil refineries and mounting transport tariffs.

At the same time, the situation in this sphere could be complicated by the fact that, in accordance with government decree 479, excise duty for oil is to increase from 39,000 rubles [R] per tonne to R55,000 as of 1 April, and to R70,000 as of 1 July. In the future it will be indexed in line with the change in the ruble rate against the dollar.

The increase in excise duty is designed to offset the state budget shortfall as a result of the abolition of oil export duty. But according to Russian and foreign sources, this offsetting measure will mean not only that prices of oil and petroleum products rise by 70-100 percent compared with their first-quarter 1996 levels (and a new spiral of "oil price" rises has already begun), but also that the profitability of oil production and, correspondingly, the volumes produced fall. According to "YUKOS" and "LUKOIL" experts, the increase in excise duty for petroleum products could cost all vertically integrated oil companies in the country at least R14 trillion in losses in 1996 alone even if oil export duty is cut or completely abolished.

Another aspect is the "dollarization" of prices of oil and petroleum products in the Russian Federation, brought about by linking excise duty to fluctuations in the ruble/dollar rate. It is typical that excise duty — that is, the most important component of petroleum product prices — is being made dependent on the ruble/dollar rate rather than on supply and demand, which by the laws of the market should determine prices of petroleum products in a market economy.

At the same time, as of 1 April a levy (R3.8 per tonne-km) is being introduced for the pumping, transportation, and handling of oil paid for by "Transneft" Joint-Stock Company organizations in the federal budget. To all intents and purposes we are talking about another avenue for replenishing the state budget. At the same time, under the government decree this levy is included in the prime cost of services for the pumping, transportation, and handling of oil. This fact will help to further push up the cost of oil transportation, which is carried out moreover by a natural monopoly — "Transneft." According to figures from OPEC experts and certain Russian Federation oil companies, whereas in the third and fourth quarters of 1995 the transport component accounted for around 40 percent of the increased cost of oil, in the first quarter of 1996 it accounted for 45-50 percent, and that figure will surpass 60 percent in the second and third quarters. Thanks to the introduction of a state budget supplement (R3.8 per tonne-km) the overall tariff level for oil pumping will increase by 25 percent, coming to almost R20 per tonne-km.

The positive impact from the reduction and abolition of oil export duty will come to R1.5 trillion on average for the Russian Federation's major vertically integrated oil companies, but the losses brought about by the increase in excise duty and the tariffs for oil pumping will exceed R3 trillion for each such company.

An extra levy on the electricity used by production enterprises (R12 per kilowatt-hour) is also envisaged for replenishing the revenue side of the state budget. But it will be paid by the producers and suppliers of electricity — that is, the regional branches of the "YeES

Rossii" Russian Joint-Stock Company. The introduction of this levy into the prime cost of production and the transfer of electricity will inevitably increase electricity tariffs, primarily for consumers in the sphere of material production. Incidentally, the growth of these tariffs has also brought about an increase in petroleum product prices, which is one of the main types of power-generating raw material (oil-fired heat and electric power stations account for more than 25 percent of total electricity production in Russia).

But the specifics of the power generation situation are that tariffs in this area were until recently state-regulated and were artificially low compared with the cost of energy sources — that is the first point. Second, until recently the government was expanding the list of sectors and facilities that were not to be cut off from the network because of defaulting. As a result, the amount owed to the power sector increased from R16 trillion in the first quarter of 1995 to R60 trillion in the first quarter of 1996, and continues to grow.

But this new addition to the tariff is, of course, unable to improve the situation with regard to enterprise payment for power (the tariff is R177.8 per kilowatt-hour for industrial consumers, R210.9 for rail transport, and R134.5 for agriculture). Moreover, the government is not abandoning the policy of regulation — the freezing of energy tariffs. As was stated in decree 479 (paragraph 9), "regional power commissions...shall take account of this levy (R12 per kilowatt-hour) when regulating electricity tariffs." But the decree says nothing about how to solve the problem of the insolvency of electricity consumers.

Russia: Zaveryukha: 50 Million Russian Families Now Own Land

LD0605183796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1516 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] UFA, May 6 (INTERFAX) — Russian Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for agriculture Aleksandr Zaveryukha, speaking in Ufa, capital of the Russian autonomy of Bashkortostan, said 50 million families were now in possession of their own land and 11 million people in the countryside had received land plots following the reorganization of state and collective farms.

The total area of private allotments in rural areas stands at 132 million hectares, while 90 percent of all farmland has been privatized, he said in a speech to a meeting of managers of the local agro-industrial complex on Monday.

But he also noted a lack of progress following the land reform, saying farm output in the five years to 1996 had slumped by 19.8 percent compared with the previous five years. Crops fell by 15.8 percent and animal husbandry by 22.2 percent.

In this context, Zaveryukha said that the government would continue to provide support for farm producers but would also demand greater efficiency in land use to be achieved by the introduction of intensive technologies, better seed-growing and cattle breeding and "bringing elementary order to the farming sector."

During a tour of Bashkortostan, the deputy prime minister visited cattle and pig breeding farms in Kumertau district and met the students and lecturers of the Bashkir Agricultural University.

He is due to leave for the nearby Chelyabinsk region later today.

International Affairs

Ukraine: Kiev Sees Full-Fledged Membership of EU as Strategic Goal

LD0605195096 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1730 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 6 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Ukraine's strategic goal is to obtain full-fledged membership in the European Union, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko said during a session of the joint committee between Ukraine and the European Union in Kiev Monday.

Ukraine sees it as its goal for the near future to broaden trade relations with European Union member countries, he said.

Udovenko cited the ratification of the agreement on partnership and cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union signed in May 1994 as a priority problem in relations between Kiev and this organization. This process is going "too slowly," he added.

The agreement has to date been ratified by the parliaments of the U.K., Denmark and Spain.

Udovenko emphasized the need to give Ukraine the status of a country with an economy in transition. The West still considers Ukraine as a country with an economy with centralized planning.

Among other problems that need to be resolved, Udovenko cited the issue of Ukrainian products receiving privileges in line with the general system of preferences and the implementation of the European Union's TACIS [Tactical Assistance To CIS] program in Ukraine.

Ukraine: Deputy Foreign Minister Meets With Iranian Counterpart

LD0605170696 Tehran IRNA in English
1633 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 6, IRNA — Acting Ukrainian Foreign Minister [as received] Anton Buteiko and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Research and Training, 'Abbas Maleki, explored ways of expanding Tehran-Kiev cooperation, especially in the scientific and cultural spheres in Kiev on Monday.

Buteiko at the meeting underlined the role of Iran in expansion of regional cooperation, especially in the area of restoring peace and stability.

He called for cooperation in convening scientific seminars, exchanging professors, facilitating work of researchers and providing training courses to Iranian and Ukrainian diplomats.

Buteiko underlined the importance of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway, which is designed to link the independent republics of the former Soviet Union to the Persian Gulf waters via Iranian soil, and said that Ukraine's first vice-premier would be attending the inaugural ceremony of the project on May 13.

Ukraine: Visit of Georgian Military Delegation

LD0605181196 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian
1520 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Georgian military delegation led by Deputy Defense Minister Lieutenant General Vano Gurgenidze is visiting Ukraine. The purpose of the visit is to establish close cooperation with the Ukrainian Defense Ministry and negotiate Ukraine's economic, technical, and theoretical assistance in the development of the Georgian armed forces.

According to Colonel General Viktor Hudym, deputy commander of the Ukrainian land forces, the Georgian military are primarily interested in receiving spare parts for military equipment and assistance in army training, particularly in the land forces and the navy, as well as the training of specialists for operational headquarters and the future training of Georgian citizens at Ukrainian military schools.

The two countries' defense ministries are working on a bilateral agreement to expand cooperation, Hudym said.

Ukraine: PRC To Buy Ukrainian-Made Equipment for Space Exploration

LD0605123996 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian
0925 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — The China National Space Administration and the National Space Agency of Ukraine [NSAU] have signed a contract to purchase the Ukrainian-made research station "Imitator" worth $1 million. Kostyantyn Yartsev, chief of the NSAU department for international issues, told UNIAN that "Imitator" has been ordered by the Harbin Polytechnic Institute. Yartsev said the unique research equipment, designed by the Kharkov Institute of Low Temperatures, makes it possible to imitate six outer space factors, in particular, temperature, infrared emission, and gravitation. Yartsev said the money to be received under the contract will be used to develop Ukraine's rocket and space industry. At the same time, he expressed confidence that the incident involving Chinese space experts which occurred at the Pivdenmach [southern machinery] enterprise in Dnepropetrovsk in February 1996 [in which Chinese space experts were accused of espionage] will not affect further cooperation between the China National Space Administration and NSAU.

The Ukrainian-Chinese agreement on cooperation in the peaceful exploration of space was signed in December 1995 during Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma's official visit to China.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma, Factions Reach Agreement on New Constitution

LD0605192896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1559 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Anna Kovaleva, Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Boris Yunanov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The country's new constitution can be approved in a nationwide referendum in June, Deputy Prime Minister Oleksandr Yemets told Interfax commenting on a Sunday meeting between President Leonid Kuchma and representatives of 11 factions, apart from Communists, who worked in a conciliatory commission for the proposed constitution.

He said agreement was reached on almost all main provisions of the new basic law adding that Kuchma had agreed to dozens of amendments proposed by the factions.

He said the president had accepted a clause on a one chamber parliament over an interim five-year period.

(The original draft offered by the Constitutional Commission envisaged a bicameral legislature - IF).

Yemets said it was agreed to determine clearer the status of the cabinet of ministers as the supreme executive body of the government and write down the relations between the head of state and the government under which the president appoints a prime minister on agreement from the law makers.

Agreement was also reached to set up a magistrates council, a special body which can wield influence on the judiciary, Yemets said, but he did not elaborate.

The deputy prime minister said although the final draft would be worse from the legal point of view, the main thing is it was passed by parliamentary representatives.

The commission fulfilled its task by agreeing 80 percent of the draft, leader of the Center parliamentary group Mikhail Sirota told reporters on Monday.

He said the idea of a one house parliament was supported by most of the commission members who also reviewed a section on human rights.

Sirota said the amended paper determines the status of the cabinet of ministers and changes the concept of a Crimean autonomy to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

Compromise was also reached on the country's emblems and a new wording of the Ukrainian anthem.

Sirota believes the draft can be brought for house debate by collecting signatures from the commission members and bypassing any decision by senior parliamentary officials.

In the meantime, the Supreme Soviet in a last night session overwhelmingly approved a resolution on the make up of a new parliamentary body, an interim commission for finalizing the commission draft.

IF Note: Until recently, the deputies were at odds on the composition of such a commission though approving a resolution on setting up one on April 24.

Agreement was reached to form the new body on a proportional basis including two members each from parliamentary groups and factions and six members from the Communist faction.

The commission is given more say in finalizing the draft constitution and authorized to bring it in parliament.

Ukraine: Deputies Form 'Nuremburg-2' Group for Trial of Communists

LD0605181896 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1520 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — A statement on setting up an informal interfactional parliamentary group called Nuremburg-2 has been circulated among deputies. The group includes 68 Supreme Council deputies from various factions. The statement says that the aim of setting up the Nuremburg-2 group is to:

1. Circulate documents issued by the Ukrainian National Committee for organizing an international trial of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [CPSU]-Communist Party of Ukraine for the totalitarian regime's crimes;

2. To collect evidence of the criminal activity of the CPSU as the leading force of the totalitarian regime together with its subunits (Communist Party of Ukraine, People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, Committee for State Security, and others) in Ukraine for the period since 1917;

3. To hold public hearings, trials, and scientific conferences regarding the legal description of the criminal actions of the CPSU in order to prepare expanded parliamentary hearings;

4. To establish links with the parliaments of states, which have suffered from the criminal activity of the CPSU and its subunits, in order to influence their governments for the purpose of organizing an international trial of the CPSU-Communist Party of Ukraine.

The Nuremburg-2 deputy group is being coordinated in the Ukrainian Supreme Council by Levko Lukyanenko, the honorary chairman of the Ukrainian Republican Party, and People's Deputies Yevhen Pronyuk (Statehood group) and Les Tanyuk (People's Movement of Ukraine faction).

The members of this informal deputy group are mostly deputies from the People's Movement of Ukraine faction and the Statehood and Reforms groups, as well as Odessa Mayor Eduard Hurvits, who does not belong to any faction, and Former Transport Minister Orest Klympush from the Center group.

Ukraine: Sevastopol Groups Protest Against Black Sea Fleet Policy

LD0605193096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, May 6 (Interfax - Ukraine) — A number of pro-Ukrainian public and political organizations in Sevastopol have voiced a protest against the Black Sea Fleet [BSF] Commander Admiral Viktor Kravchenko's pronouncements as regards the stationing in the city of the main base of the BSF of the Russian Federation.

Their statement circulated in Sevastopol today says that, "addressing newsmen at his first press-conference recently, V. Kravchenko described as something already decided the issue that Sevastopol is and will remain the main base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, and the stationing of Ukraine's Navy in Sevastopol — as inexpedient and unnatural. This is clearly wishful thinking."

The statement of protest "resolutely" demands that "Admiral V. Kravchenko stop all comments on this issue, which confuse the public, until a final political decision of issues involved in the status and base for the Russian BSF in Ukraine's territory is adopted".

The authors of the statement have described such pronouncements by the Admiral as "gross and shameless interference in the home affairs of the sovereign Ukrainian state".

The statement has been signed by representatives of the Sevastopol organizations of the society "Prosvita" (enlightenment), the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, the Popular Rukh of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Republican Party and the Kurin (assembly) of Ukrainian Cossacks.

Ukraine: Communists, Nationalists Plan Different Victory Day Events

LD0605201996 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1815 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Communist Party of Ukraine [CPU] plans a series of events to celebrate Victory Day on 9 May. According to the CPU Victory Day celebration committee, the CPU is coordinating its plans with the Russian Communist Party led by Gennadiy Zyuganov. The committee's members refused to elaborate, but said that the victory in the Great Patriotic War, won by the Soviet people, had united the nations of the former Soviet Union.

The CPU seeks to revive the tradition of unity and fraternity, at least between two nations, Russia and Ukraine, and Victory Day is the best occasion for it, Ukrainian communists said.

The People's Movement of Ukraine [Rukh] regards Victory Day as a mournful anniversary of the Soviet occupation of Ukrainian lands. "We celebrate the victory of nations over fascism in World War II, but the Soviet occupation forces destroyed half of Ukraine," Rukh's press secretary Dmytro Ponamarchuk told UNIAR. The People's Movement will hold a memorial rally in Bykovnyanskiy Forest near Kiev for the victims of Soviet repression in Ukraine.

Ukraine: Rally Held in Simferopol To Mark Crimean Constitution Day

LD0605180696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1307 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SIMFEROPOL, May 6 (Interfax - Ukraine) — About 50 people gathered in front of the Crimean parliament in Simferopol Monday to mark the Crimean Republic's first Constitution Day.

Flags of the Russian Federation and of the former Soviet Union were raised. The demonstrators held posters demanding the restoration of the Crimean Constitution adopted on May 6 1992.

Crimean leaders did not plan to hold any official events on this occasion.

Leader of Crimea's Republican Party, ex-chairman of the Crimean parliament Sergey Tsekov told Interfax - Ukraine that the party leaders had cancelled the meeting commemorating Constitution Day scheduled for Monday. He did not say why.

However, local newspapers carried an appeal signed by Tsekov: "As a result of well-coordinated actions by the anti-Crimean forces in Ukraine and in Crimea, the Ukrainian parliament illegally denounced the Crimean

Constitution adopted on May 6, 1992, eliminated the post of president and removed the city of Sevastopol from Crimea's jurisdiction."

"The republic has been deprived of its own law-enforcement agencies and TV, and its economic rights have been curtailed. Attempts are being made to turn Crimea into an ethnic state of the Crimean Tatars," says the document.

Tsekov assured the population of Crimea that his party and deputies' faction "will use the entire arsenal of legal means to safeguard the interests of the Crimean residents and to defend the republic's state system and right to join a renewed Union."

On May 6, 1992, the Crimean parliament adopted the first constitution of Crimea. On May 17, 1995, the constitution was denounced by the Ukrainian parliament as a document in violation of Ukrainian law. On November 1, 1995, the Crimean parliament adopted a new constitution which was subsequently approved by the Ukrainian parliament with the exception of a number of articles.

Ukraine: Kuchma Creates Chernobyl Center for Nuclear Security

WS0605140596 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1310 GMT 6 May 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With the aim of assisting the development of an international scientific research aimed at eliminating the aftermath of nuclear accidents and radioactive leaks, taking nuclear facilities out of operation, and facilitating ecological rehabilitation of environmental pollution by radioactive fallout, Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma has issued a decree establishing the Chernobyl center for nuclear safety, radioactive waste, and radio-ecology. The operation of the center will involve the participation of the Ukrainian Ministry for Environmental Protection and Nuclear Safety, The Ministry for Protection Against the Aftermath of the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster, the Ukrainian State Committee for Nuclear Energy Utilization, the Ukrainian State Committee for Scientific, Technological, and Industrial Policies, the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences, and other organs and institutions.

Valeriy Glygalo has been appointed director of the center. He has been directed to draw up the center's charter and submit it for approval within a period of one month. He has also been directed to draw up a program for development of the center. The Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers has been directed to resolve all issues involving the establishment and financing of the center. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry has been directed to secure the participation of other countries and international organizations in the center's operations.

The new document was commented on by Volodymyr Gorbulin, President Kuchma's national security adviser and secretary of the Ukrainian National Security Council. Mr. Gorbulin said that Ukraine and the United States signed an agreement on April 25 on assisting the operations of the center. He also disclosed that some countries and international organizations have already made known the areas in which they intend to participate. As an example, he said that French scientists have expressed interest in studying the effects of the Chernobyl nuclear accident on human health. He said that German scientists have also expressed interest, adding that both German and French scientists have already proposed research programs. As Mr. Gorbulin further disclosed, American scientists have expressed interest in studying the effects of polluted territories. He said that Russian and Belarusian scientists also intent to participate in the project. Mr. Gorbulin said that other issues of research interest are the state of the sarcophagus, disposal of nuclear fuel, and the characteristics of the water beneath and around the sarcophagus. Mr. Gorbulin said that the establishment of the international center will provide a better opportunity for resolving social problems connected with the shutdown of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

Ukraine: Water, Boric Acid Leak From Reactor at Zaporozhye AES

LD0605194596 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1800 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been a leak of water and boric acid from Reactor No. 2 at the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant in Ukraine. Highly corrosive liquid escaped from under the reactor cover. According to an official statement, no members of staff at the Ukrainian plant suffered any injuries. It is not known whether there has been any radioactive contamination of the environment.

The reactor has been closed for repairs.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Marchuk Views Causes of Payments Crisis

AU0605132796 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 27 Apr 96 p 4

[Report by Volodymyr Ilchenko: "Yevhen Marchuk: The Payments Crisis Is Systemic in Nature"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **On Thursday [25 April], the Ministry of Finance board held an expanded session**

with the participation of heads of Ukraine's oblast financial, tax, treasury, and control and auditing services. On the agenda were the results of the fulfillment of the budget in the first quarter of 1996, as well as measures for improving legislative provisions and increasing the responsibility and budget-related discipline that may help fulfill the budget for 1966. Ukraine's Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk took part in the board's work.

In his speech before financiers, Ye. Marchuk said that Ukraine is now is going through an extremely important, complex, and even dramatic stage of development and is making an effort to establish itself as an independent state, with its economy and society as a whole being in the process of formation. The fulfillment of the new course of the independent economic policy proclaimed by the president, with its main provisions detailed in the Cabinet of Ministers Program for Activity, has produced some, though **still insignificant, positive changes in the general economic situation**.

We managed to slow down the rate of decline in industrial output, but unfortunately, the decline persists. We succeeded in weakening inflationary pressure, stabilizing the currency exchange rate, and ensuring growth in the export of products and services. However, one should not overestimate export indexes — it is necessary to look at the structure. For the first time as a civilized state, Ukraine started fulfilling its current external payments obligations, and this is of great importance from the point of view of our reputation. Many people in our country do not realize this.

However, so far, the measures that have been taken have not produced the desired results. The expected structural changes in the economy have not taken place, especially in industry. We have failed to overcome the payments crisis. On 30 April, the Cabinet of Ministers will discuss a package of measures for overcoming the payments crisis.

The payments crisis is known to be systemic in nature and is therefore extremely difficult to resolve. This systemic crisis permeates the entire economy — from economic ideology and from the macro-to microlevel. Unfortunately, for the time being, no conceptualists, theoreticians, producers, or organizers of production manage to get closer to a fundamental solution to the systemic problem. Incidentally, an identical situation prevails in Russia, Belarus, Moldova, and other countries. This confirms the fact that the nature of the payments crisis lies largely in the structure of the former economy. Certain steps are known to have been taken last year against the payments crisis. However, there has been no serious progress. Unfortunately, the materials that have been prepared for the government session do not make one confident that the payments problem will be solved 100 percent. We will probably have to overstep some principles, the prime minister said, principles that we adamantly stood up for as we referred to the experience of postwar Japan or Germany. However, almost the entire economy there developed on the basis of private ownership....

This cannot be fair, Ye. Marchuk pointed out, that a good theory leads to people not getting their wages for three to five months. Perhaps, amendments need to be introduced into the relevant theoretical postulates.

We are in the process of clearly understanding the present stage of economic development. There is no way back. However, **reform should not be at any price....**

The problem of payments, stressed the premier, lies in completing **the revenue part of the budget**. The increase in the arrears in social payments within one quarter is an indication of the terrible affliction that must be comprehended deeply and seriously before relevant decisions are made. Apart from strictly economic factors, it is precisely the **human factor** that plays a major role here, that is to say, the will, mood, and desire of specific individuals. A real threat of budget collapse is looming. Even though a certain improvement in receipts to the budget has recently been observed, this cannot be reassuring.

It is a matter of the relationships between the center and the regions. The trouble is that democracy in social life, which is a good thing but is yet to develop quite seriously, and the economic liberalization have generated a democratization in the sphere of finances and budget. Objective economic conditions are approximately the same throughout Ukraine. However, if in several oblasts, the "arrears" in payments to the Pension Fund or budget can be observed throughout the year, one does not have to go deep into economic subtleties to understand the policy pursued by the leadership of such oblasts. Through finance, the actions of such local leaders are, in fact, aimed against the central power. These are not necessarily actions with ill intent. A corresponding ideology is formed — everything is done, so to speak, in the interests of the oblast. However, this does not take into account the possibility of an explosion throughout the state as a consequence of such policy.

Thus, the payments crisis and the problem of wages and the budget have, in addition to objective factors that are systemic in character, also quite banal reasons.

The centrifugal aspects do not just concern purely budgetary issues. A local authority may instruct an enterprise director: "Do not send coal or fuel oil to another region, but take care of the oblast's needs." This is allegedly done in the interests of the region, but to the detriment of the general state interests. One more example: During the spring field work, a commodity credit in the form of 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas is given to chemical plants for the production of mineral fertilizers. These fertilizers are necessary, first and foremost, for southern oblasts, where the sowing campaign is in progress. However, the oblast leader sends a directive to the plant director not to deliver the gas until the needs of the oblast are satisfied....

Barterization is the evil that also applies to the revenue part of the budget. Measures will be taken, said Ye. Marchuk, to oust barter principles from production relations. Some countries of the former USSR have banned it altogether.

The premier said that the Cabinet of Ministers meeting on 30 April will also discuss the performance of ministries, departments, regions, and enterprises in ensuring the revenue part of the budget. The efficiency of using budgetary loans and the monetary credits policy will be discussed. Incidentally, the National Bank has not yet submitted any materials to the government to enable it to prepare to discuss this issue.

All of these problems are directly associated with the painful problem of salaries, pensions, scholarships, or social payments. A whole package of measures has been prepared on this problem. However, the result will only be a temporary result, unless the revenue part of the budget is handled properly.

Ukraine: Kuchma Creates UKRGAS Joint-Stock Holding Company

WS0705113496 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1036 GMT 7 May 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to reports by the Ukrainian Presidential press service, Leonid Kuchma issued a decree "On Establishing UKRGAS State Joint-Stock Holding Company". The goal of its activity, as the document states, is to secure economic interests of the state in the process of privatizing gas economy enterprises, to strengthen discipline of supplying natural and condensed gas, as well as the payment discipline, and to meet consumers' needs. Another Decree issued by the President amends that of December 28, 1994 in view of the capital funds indexation.

Belarus

Belarus: Council of Europe Experts Examine Human Rights

WS0705084996 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0630 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minsk, 6 May — On May 6 Council of Europe (CE) experts started their visit to the Belarusian capital with a meeting with a parliamentary working group on joining the CE. The delegation of the CE experts is led by a representative of the European Court. He is accompanied by two members of the European Commission for Human Rights. MPs Pyotr Krawchanka, Anatol Lyabedzka and others told them about the political situation in the country and gave their opinion about prospects for cooperation with the Council of Europe. Then Belarusian journalists Syamyon Buchkin and Iosif Syaredzich expressed their views on the situation in the national media. The journalists said that the present attitude of the government towards the rights and liberties of journalists is an impediment to Belarus' admission to the Council of Europe. As the CE representatives noted in conclusion, though Belarus plans to join the EC at the end of 1996 or at the beginning of 1997, "this problem is not so easy and requires additional consideration."

According to information received, on the morning of May 7 the CE experts will leave for Babruysk to study the conditions in prisons. The same day they are to meet with representatives of the parliamentary Committees on National Security, Defence and Crime Prevention, and on Human Rights, National Problems, the Media and Relations with Public Associations and Religious Organisations, as well as to visit the Supreme Court and the Prosecutor's Office. On May 8, the last day of the visit, the EC experts are to meet with the Ministry of Justice leadership, visit the Constitutional Court and to hold talks with Supreme Soviet Chairman Syamyon Sharetski and Uladzimir Rusakevich, Chairman of the interdepartmental Council on Cooperation with CE.

Belarus: Polish Senators Appeal to Belarusian President

WS0705085796 Warsaw TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC in Polish 3 May 96 p 5

[Statement issued on 25 April by Senators of the Polish Republic: "Against Lawlessness"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **Belarusian opposition leader Zyanon Paznyak was the guest of Polish senators on 25 April. After the meeting, they issued the following statement:**

Upon having been informed about the situation in Belarus as far as the observation of human, civic and trade union rights is concerned, the Senat Club of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union states that these rights have been endangered by persecutions of trade union activists and the democratic opposition.

The illegalization of independent trade union organizations and persecutions of the independent democratic opposition and free trade unions defy the international responsibilities of Belarus as a European state bound by international human rights laws.

We protest the brutal police interventions during the peace demonstration held in Minsk on 24 March 1996 and express our fear that the police might be politically agitated to react similarly on 26 April in the course of celebrations of the anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, a very painful one for Belarus.

We are appealing to Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka to undertake proper action to guarantee the human right to express one's ideas freely, allow legal and pluralistic trade union activities, and respect civic dignity and freedom. We appeal for supervision of the police so as to prevent any hazards to life or health in the course of the peace demonstration scheduled for 26 April to commemorate the Chernobyl disaster.

Belarus: USSR Flag To Be Hoisted During National Holidays

WS0705085696 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0300 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Belarusian president has signed an edict on the victory flag. In particular, the edict says that a duplicate and symbol of the victory flag [as heard] and the USSR state flag are to be hoisted along with the state flag of the Republic of Belarus on Belarusian state holidays during military and national ceremonies to honor the military feats of the Belarusian people. Moreover, it is envisioned that a duplicate of the victory flag will be hoisted on the 9 May Victory Day, the 23 February Day of Defenders of the Motherland, and the 3 July Day of Belarus' Liberation from Nazi Invaders.

Belarus: Defense Chief Moves Criticized, Linked With Appointment

WS0605123596 Minsk BELORUSSKAYA DELOVAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 May 96 p 14

[Article by Yawhen Mikhalchyk: "Pigs Are Not Allowed in the Belarusian Army!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **The financial abyss into which Belarus is gradually sliding has affected all state in-**

stitutions. The same fate has befallen the Defense Ministry. This is exactly the reason why a collegium meeting devoted to the Army's economic and financial activities, chaired by Defense Minister Leanid Maltsaw and attended by a representative of the Belarusian Security Council, was held at the General Staff on 24 April.

In his opening speech, the defense minister pointed to the bleak prospects that the Armed Forces are facing. Until now, the Army has not received any money for any of the budget revenue items. In this connection, the combat readiness program is being implemented in a cut-rate version compared with past years.

The delays oin paying wages are becoming more frequent and protracted. To attract attention to its problems, the command even organized for Supreme Soviet deputies a trip to an antiaircraft firing range in Brest Oblast. Presenting to the people's servants the professional skills of air-defense servicemen, the top Defense Ministry officials made broad hints about the difficult economic condition of the Army and the need to provide assistance not only to agricultural workers.

Nevertheless, the central issue of Leanid Maltsaw's report was this: "look for resources in your home units; more independence and initiative; work more actively on issues connected with selling military property." However, without material support, the minister's appeals were received skeptically by most of the meeting participants. The commanders do not risk selling military equipment and expanding connections with commercial structures, all the more so that everyone remembers the sad experience of several officers who excessively engaged in business activities. By the way, the Military Prosecutor's Office is continuing to conduct criminal cases opened on this kind of facts. In addition, the Control Chamber has been long looking into the tiniest of details connected with the deals that the Defense Ministry's logistics service made with commercial structures and which inflicted financial losses on the ministry.

The Defense Ministry leadership is seeking to attach proper attention to the prospects of the Belarusian Army. However, some of the new innovations borrowed from Western partners during foreign visits raise, to put it mildly, doubts. For example, the minister decided to cardinally change the military catering system. It is planned that soldier's canteens will be taken over by state-commercial organizations, disregarding the fact that this move would increase the cost of meals from 25,000 to 38,000 rubles. With almost 50,000 soldiers on active service, the overall cost will prove more than a burden for the exhausted state budget. This fact notwithstanding, an order was issued to launch this experiment in canteens located in Hrodna and Machulishchi garrisons.

Despite the never-failing army rule "the chief is always right," a directive given by Leanid Maltsaw to remove all truck farms [podsobnoye khozyaystvo] from the Army by 1997 was opposed by all subordinates. For the uninitiated, it should be explained that over decades the construction of greenhouses and even cowsheds was massive in the former Belarusian Military District (and later in the Army of sovereign Belarus). The most developed agricultural branch, however, was swine production. The agricultural spin of the Defense Ministry's activities, especially with the advent of the economic crisis, allowed the commanders to improve the soldier's diet and provide subunits keeping guard or exercising on firing ranges with additional food. In remote garrisons, officers' families could buy agricultural produce for reasonable prices. Now, such practices will be stopped. And this will be done as an example of the best traditions of socialist times, because even the minister himself was unable to say clearly what should be done with the remaining property. It stands to reason that the Army's task is, in the words of the world proletariat leader, to "learn the military art thoroughly." It seems, however, that major decisions should not be adopted before a financial examination, taking into consideration the present miserable condition of uniformed people, is conducted.

The collegium meeting has shown that the example of the president, who publicly fired bungling bureaucrats during his tour of the Chernobyl zone, proved contagious. Right in the middle of the meeting, the defense minister decided to discharge the chief of the fuel and lubricants service of the Defense Ministry, who is considered guilty of not executing proper control over his service. This resulted in the failure of activities of the mechanism supplying fuel and lubricants to the troops and numerous cases of fuel theft.

Besides, General Yawhen Nikulin was fired from the position of chief of the National Agency for Control and Inspections; but reasons for discharging the main Belarusian disarmament officers remain unknown. Rumors are circulating in the Defense Ministry lobbies that several more generals will soon leave the Belarusian Army. There is no doubt that all personnel reshuffles, even if initiated by the minister, are carried out with the permission of the Security Council. Commenting on those processes, some well-informed sources link them with the oncoming parliamentary debate on Leanid Maltsaw's confirmation as defense minister. As the experience of the past years shows, this method was used by ministers to install order in the units and establish their image as tough but just father commanders. Unfortunately, they rarely use the sad experience of their predecessors, who were not saved even by such tricks.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: President Meets With Turkish Officials

LD0605233496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1914 GMT 6 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Palariya]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara, 6 May — Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov believes that the Russian military contingent deployed in his republic, which is member of the Commonwealth, is a guarantor of peace and stability in the region. He said this in Ankara on Monday evening while meeting Mustafa Kalemli, chairman of the Turkish parliament.

He said that the presence of Russian formations in Tajikistan is supported, on the one hand, by the relevant contractual and legal basis and, on the other, is aimed at strengthening the external border of the CIS. At the same time, he added, Tajik citizens account for about 95 percent of the personnel of the Russian border troops in the republic.

Emomali Rakhmanov, who had more than once drawn UN attention to the need to settle the situation in Afghanistan as soon as possible, called on the Turkish leadership and Suleyman Demirel personally to take active part in the process. He said that the situation in Afghanistan is an issue important for the entire region and of immediate concern for Tajikistan.

The same evening the Tajik leader met Mesut Yilmaz, Turkish prime minister. They discussed the current state of, and prospects for, future bilateral relations. The head of the Turkish Cabinet stressed the importance of the Turkish-Tajik economic agreements signed in Ankara and said that Ankara would do everything possible to assist Tajikistan in coping with the 50-million credit [units not specified] received from Turkey. He noted that a part of the sum which the republic is to pay back to Turkey could be returned as goods and raw materials. Emomali Rakhmanov, in his turn, called on Turkish investors to step up their activities in Tajikistan and stressed the possibility of fruitful cooperation in some areas, such as processing raw cotton, hide, and wool.

During his meetings in Ankara, Rakhmanov supported the Turkish leadership's idea to rebury in Turkey the remains of Enver Pasha, hero of a Turkish national liberation war. Zafar Saidov, the Tajik president's press secretary, told ITAR-TASS that the ceremony was scheduled for 4 August.

Tajikistan: Agreements With Turkey for Promoting Cooperation

LD0605223696 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2120 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Turkey and Tajikistan have signed nine agreements aimed at developing further bilateral cooperation. They were concluded in Ankara during President of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmanov's three-day official visit to the Turkish capital.

Turkish President Suleyman Demirel stated that the signing of a package of bilateral agreements concludes the process of creating a legal infrastructure for the further development of Turkish-Tajik relations. For his part, Rakhmanov noted that Tajikistan sees Turkey as a reliable partner in the international arena and expressed the hope that in the near future the relations between the two countries may set an example for inter-state interaction not just in Asia but throughout the world.

After the inter-governmental talks, the leaders of Turkey and Tajikistan signed a joint declaration. In it they stressed the need to further develop cooperation between the two fraternal countries and emphaszied the importance of this in view of processes under way in the world.

The document also notes that the Turkish side expresses support for the inter-Tajik talks under UN auspices and the efforts on the part of the Tajikistan leadership aimed at reaching a national accord.

At the same time Turkey confirmed that the problems surrounding Tajikistan should be resolved by way of talks in accordance with the provisions of the Tajik constitution and local legislation.

Tajikistan: Intelligence Department Said Spreading Anti-Islamic Rumors

LD0305090796 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In order to drive a rift between the leaders of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan and the Tajik United Opposition Forces, the intelligence department of [Tajik President Imomali] Rahmanov's regime circulates false rumors on the eve of every round of talks.

According to our correspondent, government radio yesterday [1 May] broadcast the so-called "Ups and Downs of Jihad" anthology which was published in the third issue of MINBAR-I ISLOM [ISLAM TRIBUNE]. The main purpose behind this was to accuse one of the opponents of Rahmanov's state, Professor Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, of rashness, whereas Prof Sayed Abdullo Nuri

— and Haji Akbar Turajonzoda himself — have repeatedly condemned such slander. They said any talk of there being differences [between them] — which is what Rahmanov, his gang of puppets, and his Kremlin protectors dream about — is just lies. However, this shameful gang continues the slander.

Tajikistan: Defense Minister Denies Military Reinforcements in Pamir

LD0605172096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0709 GMT 6 May 96

[By an unidentified ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe, 6 May — Tajik Defense Minister Sherali Khayrulloyev denied allegations made by Sayed Abdullo Nuri, Tajik opposition leader, saying that new forces are being transferred to the Pamir area, including "mercenaries from Russia." The opposition leader's appeal to UN Secretary General Butrus Ghali contains these allegations.

The minister told an ITAR-TASS correspondent over the phone that in line with the schedule, substitution of personnel rather than transfer and redeployment of troops is taking place in the Pamir. As for the "mercenaries from Russia," nobody apart from representatives of Russian press has been moved to Tavil Dara.

As the appeal mentions facts of violation of the Tehran Agreement on a temporary cease-fire, the minister said that Nuri is unlikely to regard numerous attempts made by the opposition to transfer reinforcements from Afghanistan for their mojahedin in Tavil Dara as violation of the Tehran Agreement. As a whole, Sherali Khayrulloyev considers that the opposition leader's appeal to the UN secretary general was prompted by the fact that the government forces had encircled the mojahedin forces in the Pamir.

Tajikistan: Rebels Demand Economic Organization Discuss Confrontation

LD0505100996 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 5 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Tajik Opposition has demanded that the heads of the member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization, ECO, a meeting of which will be held in Ashgabat on 17 May, discuss the issue of the confrontation in Tajikistan.

The member countries of this organization, with the exception of Turkey, are advisers in the Tajik cease-fire negotiations. Thus, the United Tajik Opposition is trying to attract the attention of the region's countries to solving the Tajik problems by political means.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan: Security Service Official on Fight Against Drugs

LD0705113196 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 4 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "All Together Against Drugs"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In connection with the Tashkent international seminar on regional cooperation in drugs control, a correspondent of UZA [Uzbek official news agency] asked Colonel Yulbars Sheraliyevich Sheraliyev, deputy head of the Main Department for Economic Security and the Fight Against Organized Crime at Uzbekistan's National Security Service [SNB], to answer questions on this problem, which is topical for the whole world.

[Correspondent] Yulbars Sheraliyevich, as is known, the fight against the drug trade primarily means stopping drug smuggling across the republic's borders. How do SNB officers organize this work? What has changed in this work since the republic became independent?

[Sheraliyev] Uzbekistan's particular geopolitical situation in Central Asia imposes a serious responsibility on it to solve many international problems, including the fight against the drug trade. [passage omitted]

As for the results of SNB activities in this area, over the past five years one can without any hesitation call them impressive. Over 450 dealers involved in smuggling drugs across Uzbekistan's borders were arrested and convicted following criminal cases by the SNB's investigative apparatus and on the basis of its operational information; about 17 tonnes of drugs — heroin, raw opium, hashish, marijuana, and synthetic drugs — were confiscated. I think our country is carrying out an important international mission in preventing drug smuggling to Russia, Turkey, and countries of western Europe. Over a comparatively short period the SNB has acquired quite weighty practical experience in carrying out wide-scale operations against the illegal drug trade and in destroying drugs. A basis has been created for training competent personnel in this field, from executives to experts. We are developing the use of specially trained dogs. All this will enable us very soon to increase the effectiveness of our work considerably.

[Correspondent] Are you cooperating in this area with the republic's other law-enforcement organizations, and the relevant services of foreign countries?

[Sheraliyev] Of course, we are actively cooperating with the Ministry of Interior Affairs and the Main Customs Department of Uzbekistan. Our republic's proximity to large drug producing regions, primarily Pakistan and Afghanistan, and military and political instability in some neighboring countries compel us to pay most attention to developing and deepening cooperation with all structures fighting against the illegal drug trade. [passage omitted]

Apart from intensive work within the framework of international agreements and accords, the SNB is actively cooperating with the special services of 20 countries, particularly Russia, Kazakhstan, the United States, and Germany. A number of meetings and conferences have been held, for instance in Ashgabat and Almaty, within the framework of the "Stop" program to fight organized crime and the drugs trade. Representatives of special services of seven countries have signed a corresponding memorandum. The basic aim of the "Stop" program is to accumulate and exchange information. Work has begun to create a database accessible for special services of all the countries that signed the cooperation agreement: the United States, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

[Correspondent] Can we already today talk about specific results of cooperation with the relevant services of foreign countries in the fight against the drugs trade?

[Sheraliyev] Yes, undoubtedly. I will cite specific facts. Together with the special services of the United States and Turkey, we conducted a controlled transport of a huge batch of heroin (1,190 kg) from Afghanistan to Turkey. Owing to the efforts of several territorial agencies of the SNB and Russia's Federal Security Service, a channel for the illegal shipment of huge batches of raw opium from Uzbekistan to Russia has been uncovered. The coordinated actions of the two services stopped the criminal activity of an interregional group of drug dealers. Seven people were detained, and over 150 kg of raw opium and huge amounts of money were seized.

As a results of controlled drug transport operations which the SNB has carried out with colleagues from Russia and Kazakhstan, 18 drug dealers were detained and over 80 kg of opium was seized.

[Correspondent] Through what channels is this dangerous freight crossing our republic?

[Sheraliyev] Drug dealers are trying to use Uzbekistan for transit of their "goods" from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran to CIS countries, Europe, and America. This is a consequence of the availability of direct air routes and the transparency of borders between Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. According to Kyrgyzstan's special services, 100 kg of drugs or more arrive in Osh Region [southern Kyrgyzstan] daily through Tajikistan's Gorno- Badakhshan. Because of this, their flow into Uzbekistan's Fergana Valley is increasing; from there they go on to the republic's other regions, and to CIS countries.

All transport routes — roads, airways, railways, and rivers — are being used for the transit of drugs via our republic. However, it is becoming more and more difficult for the drug dealers to function. This has caused an increase in attempts to smuggle drugs by illegally crossing the border from Afghanistan. This year alone our republic's border guards have seized about 200 kg of opium. [passage omitted]

Armenia

Armenia: Russian Duma Delegation Begins Visit

NC0605160396 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1402 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, May 6 (NOYAN TAPAN) — A delegation of the Russian State Duma led by Duma's Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev arrived Monday [6 May] in Yerevan on a two-day visit. Russian parliamentarians are visiting Armenia at the invitation of Armenia's Parliament Chairman Babken Ararktsyan.

At the Yerevan "Zvartnots" airport Gennadiy Seleznev said he pinned great hopes on the current visit.

No political and regional problems will be discussed during the visit, Seleznev said. Seleneznev described these problems as being "too delicate", adding, that they (the political and regional problems) should be dealt with by an ad hoc commission. However, Seleznev did not rule out the possibility of addressing themselves to these problems if necessary.

The Russian parliamentary delegation is made up of Nikolay Ryzhkov (head of "People's Governance" group), G. Tikhonov (member of "People's Governance" group), E. Bolshakov (Liberal-Democratic Party), S. Karapetian ("Yabloko"), V. Lysenko ("Russian regions" group), A. Paradiz ("Our Home Russia"), K. Tsiku (Communist Party), G. Churkin (Agrarian deputy group), etc.

Russian parliamentarians are scheduled to meet with President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Parliament Chairman Babken Ararktsyan, Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan, Catholicos of All Armenians Garegin I, chairmen of Armenian National Assembly's permanent commissions, members of factions and deputy groups, as well as with heads of Armenia's leading mass media.

Russian and Armenian delegations will also lay wreaths to the Genocide Memorial and the grave of Unknown Soldier in the Victory Park.

Armenia: Chairman of National Assembly Meets State Duma Speaker

LD0605212496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1459 GMT 6 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yerevan, 6 May — Babken Ararktsyan, chairman of the Armenian National Assembly, has received a State Duma parliamentary delegation headed by Gennadiy Seleznev, the chairman of the house, which is now in Yerevan. Greeting the guests, the speaker expressed the hope that the visit by the State Duma delegation will promote the development of cooperation between the Russian and Armenian parliaments and will act as a stimulus for expanding links at the level of parliamentary commissions. Vahan Mkrtchyan, the head of the press service of the Armenian National Assembly, who was present at the conversation, reported this to an ITAR-TASS correspondent.

For his part, G. Seleznev stressed the importance of developing interparliamentary cooperation between the two countries and spoke about the work of the lower house of the Russian parliament. The interlocutors spoke in favor of developing mutually advantageous cooperation between the Russian and Armenian parliamentarians in the parliamentary assemblies of the Council of Europe, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Council, the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, and other authoritative international organizations.

The Russian State Duma delegation visited Yerevan's "Victory" park and laid a wreath at the Grave of the Unknown Soldier. The State Duma representatives honored the memory of Armenia's sons who fell in the Great Fatherland War with a minute's silence. The guests also familiarized themselves with the exposition of the State Museum of Armenian Military History.

The processes of rapprochement between our states that are now under way in the spheres of the economy, culture, and science are very positive, G. Seleznev said after the wreath-laying ceremony. We have been working with Armenian parliamentarians both within the framework of the Interparliamentary Assembly and on a bilateral basis for a long time, the speaker noted. Now we are giving a good start to new cooperation between the deputies of the second [convocation] Duma and the Armenian parliamentarians. "I am convinced," G. Seleznev said, "that there is a mass of economic, political, and cultural topics, which are familiar to us and that we will be advancing and implementing." "There are no contradictions in close mutually beneficial cooperation between Armenia and Russia: We always understood one another and will continue to understand each other even more," the State Duma chairman said.

Armenia: Agreements Concluded With Russian Defense Minister

NC0605162996 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1402 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, May 6 (NOYAN TAPAN) — Armenian and Russian Defense Ministers sealed 13 agreements defining the strategy and tactics of Armenia-Russia military cooperation. The following key documents were signed:

1. "Final Protocol of the Working Meeting between Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries, regarding the Problems of Bilateral Military Cooperation"

2. "Russian-Armenian Agreement on Control over Quality of Goods Supplied to Russian and Armenian Forces"

3. "Russian-Armenian Protocol on Use of Radio Frequency by Russian Military Base in Armenia and on Ensuring Electromagnetic Compatibility of Radioelectronic Devices"

4. "Protocol of the Meeting between Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries, regarding approaches towards creation of coalition group of forces in Transcaucasia and involvement of Russian and Armenian Forces, and Russian Military Contingent in Armenia in a Coalition Group"

5. "Protocol of the Meeting of Russian and Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding bilateral cooperation in the field of joint planning and holding of military exercises"

6. "Protocol of the Working Meeting between Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding employment of servicemen and civil persons at the Russian Military Base located on the territory of Armenia"

7. "Protocol of the Working Meeting of Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding military-technical cooperation"

8. "Protocol of the Working Meeting Between Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding bilateral cooperation in reorganization of Russian military formations and groups stationed on the territory of Armenia"

9. "Protocol of the Working Meeting of Russian and Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding cooperation in training of cadres"

10. "Protocol of the Working Meeting of Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding military-scientific cooperation"

11. "Protocol of the Working Meeting of Russian and Defense Ministries' top officials, regarding cooperation in anti-aircraft defense"

12. "Plan for Bilateral Cooperation Between Russian and Armenian Defense Ministries for 1996"

13. "Draft Agreement on Legal Status of the Russian Air Force Detachment on the territory of Armenia".

Armenia: Ter-Petrosyan Visits Russian Border Guards Unit

MM0705093296 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 May 96 p 2

[Report by Lieutenant Colonel Gagik Bulgadaryan: "Armenia Ready for Military Cooperation With Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yerevan — Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has visited an outpost of the "Armenia" Military Group's Artashatskiy Border Detachment, which is part of the Red Banner Caucasus Special Border District. He studied Russian border guards' living and working conditions and attended drills. The president was accompanied by Andrey Urnov, Russian Federation ambassador to Armenia; Serzh Sarkisyan, the republic's minister of national security; and other officials.

Levon Ter-Petrosyan thanked the Russian border guards for their excellent service and expressed confidence that they would continue to be equal to their tasks. The president particularly stressed that whereas the economy is a priority area for the other CIS states when it comes to integration with Russia, for Armenia it is primarily military matters. Levon Ter-Petrosyan said that Yerevan intends to continue deepening this area of integration with Moscow.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Pledges To Recover Shusha, Lachin Peacefully

NC0605184896 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] May 8 will mark the fourth anniversary of the occupation of Shusha by the Armenians. As is known, Lachin, too, fell to the Armenians as a result of the weakening of the defensive capabilities in the Republic due to the occupation of Shusha.

On the eve of the anniversary of this grave event in our history, Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev met today a group of refugees from the Shusha and Lachin regions.

Aliyev spoke in detail on the reasons for the surrender of these important settlements to the enemy. He noted that within a short period of time, the Armenians stepped up the implementation of their plan for major occupations in Karabakh, starting with Shusha and Lachin — due to the extreme carelessness and irresponsibility of those running the country, the lack of discipline in the army, the ineptness of the people responsible, and the failure to organize defense at an adequate level.

Another reason for the occupation of Shusha and Lachin was the ongoing struggle for [word indistinct] power in Baku. Instead of organizing the defenses and helping the combat units, those in power fought each other. Now there is much difficulty involved in the recovery of these lands, given away to the enemy so easily.

Aliyev spoke of the efforts he is making, as president, to resolve the Karabakh problem and return the refugees to their homes. He said this problem should now be solved only on the international level, with the efforts of international organizations and influential countries. [Aliyev said:] Therefore, as president, I am now working to chart the basic direction of our foreign policy towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict and the recovery of all Azerbaijan's occupied lands.

Aliyev also noted that, as usual, the Armenian side continues to take advantage of the influence of the Armenian lobby at talks aimed at the liberation of Shusha and Lachin, and thus obstructs a just solution to the problem.

The Azerbaijani president also talked about other problems disturbing the refugees.

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Holds Discussion With Iranian Official

NC0605134896 Baku TURAN in English 1036 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/06.05.96/TURAN—On Sunday [5 May] President Aliyev received deputy Foreign Affairs Minister of Iran, Abbas Maleki, who is currently in Azerbaijan. The issue related to forthcoming opening of railroad Mashhad-Sarakhz has been touched upon during the meeting.

Mr. Maleki said participation of Azeri President in the ceremony of opening of road, in which the heads of neighbouring states will take part, as well as in the session of Ashgabat summit of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) would have been of primary importance. Iran's diplomat said that important issues will be discussed during the meeting among the heads of ECO-member states in Ashgabat.

"I have received invitation from President Rafsanjani. I will certainly arrive in Mashhad and will participate in opening of the railroad Mashhad-Sarakhz. I hope there will be the meetings with President Rafsanjani", President Aliyev said. He said new meeting between Iran's and Azerbaijan's President would have been useful for further strengthening of bilateral relations.

President Aliyev said now there are favourable possibilities for expanding for the Azerbaijani-Irani relations on official level as well as between the citizens of both countries.

"Our relations have deep and firm historical roots", President Aliyev noted.

Then the meeting continued behind closed doors.

Azerbaijan: Former Foreign Minister's Trial Begins

LD0705084096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0539 GMT 7 May 96

[By Sevindzh Abdulayeva and Viktor Shulman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, May 7 (Itar-Tass) — On Tuesday, the Azeri Supreme court begins trial of Azeri ex-foreign minister Tofik Gasymov, 58, who was Azeri foreign minister since June 1992 until June 1993 when the Azeri People's Front was in power. Gasymov will stand trial on charges of involvement in abortive coup d'etat in mid-March, 1995. Court proceedings related to Gasymov' case were also instituted against Adyl Gadzhiyev, former state adviser in the administration of ex-president Ayaz Mutalibov, and Kenan Gurel, a citizen of Austria of Turkish extraction.

During an investigation it was established that Gasymov and the other two defendants were in contact at the former Center of Strategic Research in Baku where the coup was masterminded, law enforcement sources said.

Gasymov's relatives told Itar-Tass by telephone yesterday that Gasymov intends to be present in the courtroom. However, they did not rule out that the trial might be postponed. An appeal asking to postpone the trial was lodged with the Supreme Court by 40 physicists from the national Academy of Sciences, the committee for the defence of the rights of the ex-minister, the Azeri human rights Centre and a number of influential international human rights organizations, who declared that Gasymov, who was released from custody on February 22, 1996, was in poor health after being kept almost for five months at a detention centre of the Azeri Security Ministry.

The Azeri Supreme Court does not object to hearings into the ex-foreign minister's case being postponed. However, to postpone the trial Gasymov's lawyer has to provide strong arguments to substantiate the postponement, including a medical certificate.

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze's Weekly Radio Interview

LD0605140096 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0715 GMT 6 May 96

[Regular weekly studio interview with Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze by correspondent Nato Oniani, in Tbilisi on 6 May — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Oniani] Mr President, the lari was once again stable last week. In your radio interviews and public addresses you have reiterated that international financial organizations continue to support THE economic reforms in Georgia, and especially stabilizing the lari.

Last week, there was a misunderstanding, to put it mildly, at the meeting between an IMF representative and Georgian businessmen.

[Shevardnadze] Thank you. Good morning. As you say, last week saw intensive contacts with high ranking representatives of international financial organizations. The aim of the visit by the World Bank mission led by Basil Kavalsky, head of Country Department IV [of the World Bank], was to prepare a consultative meeting scheduled to take place in Paris at the end of May between the countries which are financing various programs in Georgia. In order to conduct the above meeting successfully, the World Bank mission assessed the measures currently under way in Georgia — the implementation of programs for institutional development; the rehabilitation of the urban infrastructure; improvements to the health service; as well as preparations for the rehabilitation of transport, power, and engineering systems, the development of agriculture, social investment funds, and other projects. Tens of millions of dollars have been allocated for these purposes.

We must consider the fact that last year the World Bank allocated to Georgia $75 million to cover the budget deficit. Recently, on 13 April, the World Bank allocated to Georgia $65 million within the framework of a structural reconstruction loan for financing the 1996 budget. [passage omitted]

The gradual implementation of the president's decree on emergency measures to achieve microeconomic stabilization and systemic reconstruction has helped carry out the above projects. The implementation of these measures has become possible in Georgia over the last two years through close cooperation with the IMF. These measures have been and still are being implemented with the IMF's assistance, and its systemic transformation loan amounting to $80 million, a standby reserve loan of $119 million, and this year's Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility [ESAF] loan of $246 million, allocated for structural reconstruction and given for a three-year period.

The aim of the IMF's current visit to Georgia is to study the implementation of the above program. The IMF mission is led by [Muhammed] Shadman Valavi, a well-known person and a friend of Georgia. It is thanks to cooperation with him that inflation has dwindled, and that the national currency has been introduced and its exchange rate stabilized. We also agreed on the ESAF program. The aim of the ESAF program is to rehabilitate the economy and improve the population's social security. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] We must consider what backs up the lari, what makes it stable, and we must not cherish the illusion that the lari is stable by itself without any support from international financial organizations.

[Shevardnadze] The key aim of the newly granted three-year loan of $246 million is to guarantee the stability of the lari for the next three years, and this is a realistic goal. Without this support inflation would be inevitable. [passage omitted]

Listeners must know that there is a difficulty about mobilizing financial resources in the budget. It is true that according to the Customs Department, budget revenues for March-April were 8.5 million lari, which is 75 percent of the sum received in the last four months. In April, alone budget revenues were 4.5 million lari, which exceeds the revenue for March by approximately 20 percent. Revenues for the four months are only 93 percent of what has been planned.

According to preliminary data from the Tax Inspectorate, the situation here is more difficult. The expected budget revenue for April is 18 million lari and 62 million lari for the last four months. This is not enough, because tax payments have not been made by certain spheres of the economy, and this creates considerable difficulties. In particular, the excise tax paid by the Tax Inspectorate over four months was only 38 percent and the Customs Department 21 percent. This calls for in-depth research and emergency measures. [passage omitted]

I am planning to order the Finance Ministry and the Economy Ministry, as well as the president's regional service, to give me specific reasons for the shortcomings in certain regions and departments, as well as suggestions for implementing personnel changes there.

The above situation considerably influences the formation of revenues in the central budget. According to the Finance Ministry, the volume of loans received in April was 17 million lari, that is, the monthly plan was met by only 67 percent.

One of the key reasons for the failure to meet the central budget requirements is obstacles to transactions between the banks. According to the Tax Inspectorate, nearly 3 million lari of the amount received as taxes was belatedly put on the balance sheet of the central budget. This must be stopped. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] Thank you. A key problem for our state is building the Georgian army. Last week, at the Algeti training base you attended military maneuvers conducted by the Defense Ministry. You applauded the level of the forces' training. A Moscow television program said that many people attended the maneuvers. However, if I remember rightly, only four tanks and three helicopters were used and it cost the state approximately 150,000 lari. Your comments.

[Shevardnadze] My comments are as follows: the military maneuvers exceeded all expectations from the point of view of the correctness of their goal and the high professionalism displayed in carrying out the set goal, as well as the precise interaction between different units of the armed forces. I have attended many maneuvers, both in the past and recently too, and I must say that these were impressive indeed.

The Defense Ministry leadership, its generals, officers and soldiers have been praised highly and have earned the gratitude of the commander-in-chief. The main aim now is to hold similar show maneuvers - as I would characterize them - in the future, at battalion and brigade level, with the participation of combat units from different departments. We need time for this, but it is necessary.

I shall spell this out: 100 hundred officers participated in the maneuvers and only the planned amount of equipment and ammunition was used for the realization of our goal.

I can boldly state to the citizens of Georgia that by friendly cooperation with the Russian armed forces, the Georgian state has managed to create the potential for self-defense in a short time. Self-defense is one of the key conditions for the country's freedom, democratic development, and its territorial integrity.

The future development of the armed forces will depend to a large extent on the country's economic situation, the fulfillment of the budget and on the care taken to strengthen the country's defense by every member of every region, every family and every citizen.

[Oniani] In several days the whole world will celebrate the day of victory over fascism. Many of our compatriots were among the millions killed in the war but the number of the survivors diminishes by every 9 May. The problems connected with their social security have been growing recently as there are problems in the country on the whole.

[Shevardnadze] The day of victory over fascism - 9 May - is near at hand. The whole world celebrates the day, including Georgia, of course, as Georgia's input to this great historic event is special. This is a significant day as it reminds us of the lessons of the past, calls for peace and friendship between peoples.

I congratulate all of you, especially our veterans - the tormented and the troubled. Every town, every district, every department must show care and attention to the war veterans and their families. The president's apparatus will check on the effectiveness of the measures carried out in this connection in Georgia's regions.

Unfortunately, the law on the veterans, adopted by parliament, has not been put into effect fully. The key problem is the scarcity of budget revenues and this is the result of the country's hardship. [passage omitted] Despite the hardship, I trust that the 9 May celebration will be marked with respect.

[Oniani] Batono Eduard, when we are talking about the country's economy and the state of the country, one of the key issues is Georgia's intellectual potential. You have mentioned this many times in the past and stressed it once again last week at the institute for space research.

[Shevardnadze] We have decided that this institute will be called the Institute for the Construction of Space Equipment. This institute has already been recognized as an independent scientific establishment. This institute, which I visited yesterday, is a confirmation of the fact that the country's creative and scientific potential, despite everything, is at the level of world standards. Space equipment - that is what I would call it - made at the institute, offer brilliant samples of the scientific and engineering mind. A realistic possibility has been created for the export of Georgia's scientific achievements. Such a possibility for export is the greatest capital for the country and we must use it in an intelligent and timely manner. Our departments must learn how to do this.

One of the projects which can be implemented in the near future deals with the space communications network. If Georgia participates in the implementation of this project, then the country would get approximately 200-300 million annually.

[Oniani] In U.S. dollars?

[Shevardnadze] Yes, in U.S. dollars, of course. As for the development of science, yesterday I made a decision to issue a decree which would reflect the relevant measures to be taken and appropriate assistance to be shown for the development of science. I decided to award state medals to the employees who have withstood a hellish test and managed to retain this gem for the country.

Georgia: Shevardnadze Orders Abkhazia Settlement Program

LD0705083496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0526 GMT 7 May 96

[By Tengiz Pachkoriya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI May 7 (Itar-Tass) — Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze has issued an order on drawing up a state programme of the settlement of the Abkhazia conflict.

The order says that the Georgian parliament adopted a resolution on April 17, this year, on measures to be taken to settle the conflict in Abkhazia, in which it recommended the Georgian National Security Council to draw up a state programme of the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia within two months. Shevardnadze instructed the Georgian ministers of foreign affairs, state security and defence, together with a personal representative of the president on the settlement of conflicts and with the participation of the institutions and organisations concerned to work out a state programme of settling the conflict in Abkhazia and submit it for the consideration of the Georgian National Security Council before May 20, 1966.

Latvia

Latvia: Prime Minister Skele Reports 'Fruitful' Chernomyrdin Talks

LD0505153596 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1500 GMT 5 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Latvian and Russian prime ministers agreed in Visby [town on the Swedish island of Gotland] on the timescale for resolving problems between the two countries. After a meeting with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Prime Minister Andris Skele said the talks were fruitful. Skele noted that concluding an agreement with Russia on taking back refugees is a particularly important issue because Latvia wants to expand the list of countries with which it has visa-free travel. It is planned to sign this agreement by 1 June.

Latvia: President Ulmanis on Talks With Lithuanian Counterpart

LD0605161296 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1300 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas is visiting Latvia. After talks with State President Guntis Ulmanis, the two presidents signed a joint declaration. The declaration stresses that Latvia and Lithuania will facilitate and deepen mutual cooperation to promote the achieving of the strategic targets of the two countries. The declaration stresses that the two countries will try to reach an agreement on delimitation of the maritime border. Latvia and Lithuania also recognize the need to observe the rights of the minorities, to improve customs and border control procedures, and to conclude a free-trade agreement in agricultural goods in the immediate future. The two countries are in favor of the Baltic states' speedy admission to the European Union and NATO.

Guntis Ulmanis expressed his opinion on the declaration, which was signed today, at the Monument of Freedom where he and Algirdas Brazauskas laid flowers.

[Begin Ulmanis recording] (?We in practice) [words indistinct] have summarized in one document what has been done, what has been discussed, what has been thought, and what has been planned. [words indistinct] a specific material view on what we have to do, what we have to tackle specifically, and what strategic positions we have to take, because principles of unity and cooperation lie in the basis of our work. Neither Estonia nor Lithuania [words indistinct] can enter European institutions in solitude and in a kind of deep individualism, and it will hardly be possible to create [words indistinct] a stable basis for a security strategy. [end recording]

The Latvian president also replied to a question about the general content of the talks between the two state presidents.

[Begin Ulmanis recording] Customs-Grenstale will have to become the first joint customs point — a free-trade agreement covering agriculture, and transit of oil and oil products through Ventspils, Butinge, and Klaipeda — those are main issues that we specifically discussed today. And [words indistinct] (?who) will make, I think, practical decisions on these issues.

We discussed the maritime border rather humorously but with an admixture of goodwill, because there is no conflict situation between Latvia and Lithuania, rather there is a conflict in the very essence of this issue. And commissions on both Lithuanian and Latvian sides must find the more correct solutions and I think that that time is not far. [end recording]

Latvia: Estonian Premier Said To Regret Maritime Incident

LD0305152596 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Estonian Prime Minister Tiit Vahi has expressed regret to Latvian Prime Minister Andris Skele over the incident that occurred in the Gulf of Riga between Latvian and Estonian ships. Yesterday an Estonian border guard ship forced several Latvian fishing boats to stop in the common fishing zone in the Gulf of Riga, which has been created in a bilateral (?agreement).

A statement signed jointly by the prime ministers says that [several words indistinct] fishing dispute must be settled by 1 August by creating a joint fishing zone in a [word indistinct] area of the Gulf of Riga. In this area Estonian border guards will not detain Latvian fishing boats.

Latvia: Latvian, Lithuanian Leaders Make Joint Statement on NATO

WS0605141696 Tallinn BNS in English 1200 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, May 6, BNS — The admission of the Baltic states to NATO is the only means to ensure stability in Europe, according to a joint statement by Latvian and Lithuanian presidents.

Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis and his Lithuanian counterpart Algirdas Brazauskas signed the statement Monday in Riga in the framework of Brazauskas' visit.

The Baltic states will continue to work consistently to achieve the full-fledged membership of the alliance, according to the document.

Both Latvia and Lithuania are urging the European Union to begin membership talks with all candidates at once and no later than six months after the end of its Intergovernmental Conference.

Under the declaration, Latvia and Lithuania pledge cooperation in economy, science, culture, defense and environmental protection.

The presidents claim that their countries are equally aware of the necessity for a mutually favorable agreement on maritime borders.

To improve the customs and border crossing practices, the countries will promote the setup of common checkpoints and assist each other in the fight against organized crime, illegal migration, smuggling and "money-laundering."

Latvia and Lithuania also deems it necessary to step up bilateral cooperation with Ukraine and Belarus, according to the document.

Relations with Russia should be built "in the spirit of equality, mutual respect and understanding," the declaration said.

The presidents also underscored a need to forge ties with Central Europe and Nordic countries to enchance the integration of their countries into Europe.

The Baltic regional cooperation will encourage their integration into to the European structures and the economic development both of the region and entire Europe, the statement said.

As reported, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas and his daughter Audrone Usoniene arrived in Latvia Monday for a two-day official visit.

Lithuania

Lithuania: Brazauskas Hopes for Good Relations With Russia

LD0605195196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1738 GMT 6 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, May 6 (Interfax) - Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas hopes that Russia and Lithuania will preserve the constructive nature of their relationship, no matter who wins the upcoming presidential elections in Russia.

Despite "various tendencies in the Russian State Duma and the military conflict in Chechnya, Lithuania seeks to preserve constructive and equal relations with Russia, based on international law," Brazauskas told Latvian parliament deputies in Riga, where he arrived for a visit Monday. He expressed the hope that such relations will be preserved "after the elections in Russia, no matter who wins them."

As for the Baltic countries' quest for NATO membership, Brazauskas pointed to the need "not to create a wrong view in Russia that it will be isolated."

Lithuania "is prepared to make its contribution to the dialogue between the West and Russia," he said.

Brazauskas pointed to the good-neighborly nature of relations between Riga and Vilnius but said they lacked practical contents in many areas.

He believes that the parliaments and governments of both countries "should not discard last April's proposals of the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers on the abolition of state borders between the Baltic countries."

The Baltic Assembly is an organ of interparliamentary cooperation, to which Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia each send 20 deputies. The Baltic Council of Ministers is an organ of intergovernmental cooperation. Resolutions of the two institutions serve as recommendations for the parliaments and governments of the three countries.

Lithuania: Stankevicius, Chernomyrdin Plan To Sign Oil Transit Accord

LD0505192896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1447 GMT 5 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Lithuanian Prime Minister Mindaugas Stankevicius and his Russian counterpart Viktor Chernomyrdin met in Visby, Sweden, on Saturday to confirm the intention to conclude a bilateral oil transit agreement.

Stankevicius and Chernomyrdin met within the framework of a session of the Baltic States' Council.

Chernomyrdin said that for Russia it would be more profitable to use the existing oil terminals in Klaipeda and Ventspils than building new ones in St Petersburg and Kaliningrad.

The Lithuanian and Russian prime ministers also discussed illegal immigration. They believe there must be a special act regulating relations between the two countries in that field.

Stankevicius and Chernomyrdin also discussed mutual settlements and agreed to help solve problems in that field.

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